



Take a journey and explore the story of how the Mildura region became an irrigated oasis in the midst of an arid land (Australia's first irrigation colony).

HISTORIC DEAKIN AVENUE WALK

1.8 km | 45 – 60 min



1 Alfred Deakin Centre

Your starting point is The Alfred Deakin Centre named in honour of Australia's second Prime Minister who played a significant role in the transformation of Mildura from sheep station to irrigation oasis. The building opened in 1997 and currently houses the Visitor Information and Booking Centre, the Waves Aquatic Centre, the Mildura Library, the Benetook Room conference facility and Solunar Café. An original canoe tree stands proudly in the centre around which the building was erected and pays homage to the many First People who inhabited the area before European settlement.

The distinctive sculpture at the front by artist Dimitri Nickas weighs approximately 1700 kilograms and stands 5.7metres high. Nicknamed the whirly wind, it is very apt for our region.



2 Kirkee Private Hospital

Cross the road to Sandors Motel where you will find a plaque on the front of the building commemorating its previous life as home to the Kirkee Private Hospital. Established by Sister Ethel Giddings in the 1920s, it was one of many private hospitals established in the district.

Walk northeast along Deakin Avenue towards Eleventh Street and the river end of town and continue along the wide boulevard that is Deakin Avenue.



3 Deakin Avenue Plantation

In laying out the plan of Mildura, the Chaffey brothers wanted to make it a vibrant community. Prominent locations were made available for churches and social clubs many of which you will pass on this walk. Parks and town transport were an important consideration – together this gave us the picturesque centre plantation of Deakin Avenue. Lanes and streets were laid out in all the town planning in the American model of streets and avenues. This plan was also used in the Ontario Colony where Euclid Avenue connects Ontario to Upland, now Mildura's Sister City.



4 St Andrew's United Church

165 Deakin Avenue

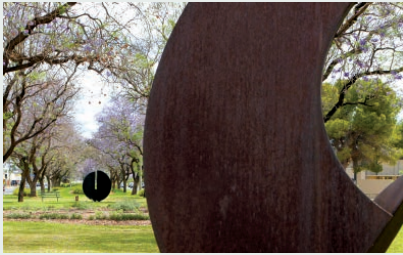
On the corner of Deakin Avenue and Eleventh Street is St Andrew's Uniting Church. St Andrew's was completed in 1915 and was originally a Presbyterian church. Its grand gothic styled spire stands 27.7 metres (90 feet).



5 St Margaret's Anglican Church

247 Eleventh Street

Across the road is St Margaret's Anglican Church which opened in 1902. The vestry and bell tower were added in 1957 to honour the lost soldiers of World War II. Thought to be originally named for St Margaret of Antioch, patron saint of expectant mothers, in more recent times it has been attributed to St Margaret of Scotland, wife of Macbeth's Malcolm.



6 Centre Plantation Sculptures

Throughout the city you will notice sculptures dotting the landscape. From 1961 to 1988 the city hosted the Mildura Sculpture Triennial, an important event in Australian art promoting Australian contemporary sculpture. The legacy of this can be seen particularly along Deakin Avenue and although, over the years the Triennial courted its fair share of artistic controversy, the public works of art acquired by the city are now an important part of the Mildura landscape.



7 WWI Memorial

As with most Australian towns, memorials to conflicts of war are a prominent feature. As you cross over Eleventh Street and Deakin Avenue in the centre plantation stands the war memorial dedicated to those lost in World War I. The memorial was erected by the Returned Soldiers and Sailors Imperial League of Australia R.S. & S.I.L.A. and is known locally as the Edith Cavell statue.

Edith Cavell, a British nurse posted to Brussels in German-occupied Belgium, is celebrated for saving the lives of soldiers from both sides without discrimination. In 1915, the German occupying forces accused her of helping prisoners escape and she was sentenced to death by firing squad and executed on the 12 October 1915.



8 Church of Christ

125 Deakin Avenue

On the left hand corner of Tenth Street is the Church of Christ, featuring a classical façade with Tuscan columns. Originally built in 1908 with voluntary labour the church has undergone extensive modifications over the years.



9 Methodist Church MADEC

126 – 130 Deakin Avenue

On the opposite side of Deakin Avenue is the distinctive Methodist Church known locally as the "Wesley Church". Built in 1912, this striking building served as the Methodist Church until 1977 when the Methodist Church, the Presbyterian and the Congregational Union unified to become the Uniting Church and the services were moved to St Andrew's Church. Today it is owned by the MADEC educational and training organisation. The adjoining buildings have been erected in sympathy to the unusual Byzantine architecture of the church.



10 Centre Plantation Flower Beds

Along the length of Deakin Avenue there are many flower beds dedicated to various service organisations such as Rotary, Lions, and the CWA. You may notice at this point in your walk new plantings and fresh landscaping along the centre plantation. Many of the sugar gums planted by the Chaffeyes and early towns folk have, through old age and insect infestation, sadly had to be removed. The seeds taken from the trees have been propagated and will be used in future plantings maintaining the link to the Chaffey era.



11 Limestone sculptures

Dotted along the medium strip of Deakin Avenue are some unique limestone structures. During the 1930s Great Depression, thousands of transient people passed through the region searching for employment. Many locals took them in, providing food, shelter and support when they could. To repay this generosity a group banded together and built a series of stone structures using local limestone to express their appreciation. Look out for the drinking fountain, large basket and raised garden bed which are all a thank you from another age.



12 Mildura Working Man's Club

100- 110 Deakin Avenue

Your next port of call is the famous Mildura Working Man's Club, once acclaimed for having the world's longest bar measuring approximately 91 metres (298ft) and featuring 32 beer taps. Building began in 1908 as a one story structure with the second story added in 1935. You are welcome to enjoy a meal or light refreshment in the Bistro or bar. Just remember to sign in at the front desk.

Directly outside on the footpath stands a war memorial dedicated to the soldiers of World War I. Many a rookie policeman has been called to the front with reports that a man with a gun is on the pavement!



13 Deakin Cinema

93 Deakin Avenue

Across the road from the Working Man's Club is the Wallis Cinema Deakin. If you look to the left of the cinema entrance the curious architecture of the A frame roof. Now part of the cinema, this was once the Masonic Temple built in 1907. The Masons now have a purpose built centre on Fifteenth Street Irymple. However, when the cinema took over the site they decided to keep the 1907 façade.



14 Mildura Club

81-95 Deakin Avenue

The large building dominating the corner of Ninth Street and Deakin Avenue is the Mildura Club. Completed by 1920, it is the home of the oldest club in Mildura which was established in 1888. Ionic pillars adorn the entrance and although minor changes have been made, the building still retains much of the flavour of its period. Inside the main bar you can see the punkah's (Indian ceiling fans designed to circulate air) which are still used to this day. Once a staunchly men only club, it amended its constitution in 2018 to allow female members to join after a century of exclusion.



One of 12 historically significant sites of The Chaffey Trail heritage experience.



15 William Chaffey Statue

In the centre plantation overlooking his old club stands William Chaffey, looking out into the future landscape of the city. The Chaffey brothers, George and William, established the irrigation industry which has dominated the region's economy since the 1890s. To learn more about their story please take the journey along the Chaffey Trail.

W.B., as he was known, died in 1926 and this bronze statue, erected to his memory, was unveiled in 1929. The sculptor, Paul Montford, was also responsible for the statuary at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance. A similar statue can be found in Renmark, South Australia. Such was W.B. Chaffey's influence on the region.



16 Civic Building

76 Deakin Avenue

The angular building on the corner is the Mildura Rural City Council Civic Building which was opened in 1958. Previously the site of the original Shire Hall or Mildura Town Hall, this building now houses many departments within council as well as the main Council Chambers.



17 The Carnegie Centre

74 Deakin Avenue

The quaint, elegant cream building next to the Civic Building is the Carnegie Centre. Home of the Mildura and District Historical Society and the Genealogical Society, this building was the town's first library, the result of a grant from the Scottish American philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie. Opened in 1908, the clock tower was added as a memorial to the locals lost in World War I. The names of the fallen are inscribed on the two brass tablets as a permanent reminder of their sacrifice. Dedicated in 1922, when Mildura's population was approximately 5,500 people, it brings into sharp focus the reality of the loss of almost 200 people from one small town.



18 The Band Rotunda

Just across, in the centre plantation, stands the band rotunda, once a common sight in country Australia. Its correct name is the DeSailly Rotunda and it was erected in memory of Councillor George DeSailly, an early Shire President.



19 Risbey Chambers

Cross Deakin Avenue to the west side. You are now entering the legal district of Deakin Avenue. Across the road from the Civic Building stands Risbey Chambers which was built in 1911. Originally a home owned by Samuel Risbey, a sawmill owner, in more recent years the building has been a legal chambers and a travel agent. Next door, the fine Edwardian building, which was built in 1914 was once the State Bank though now stands vacant.



20 Deakin House

65 Deakin Avenue

A little further along is the Art Deco designed Deakin House, formerly Etheringtons the Jewellers, which has relocated to Langtree Avenue. Deakin House was built in 1932 on the site of the former Williams Store (c. 1890). The Art Deco shop front and interior is still intact including signage and internal fittings. The front door is in the streamline style.



21 General Store

61 Deakin Avenue

This is the earliest surviving building in Mildura. It started out as Mildura's first general store, owned by H.B. Williams, the first Shire President in 1887. Together with his son-in-law, they continued trading as a general store under the name of Williams and Yule until 1903. Taken over by a bank in 1937, its appearance was altered to what you see today. It is now occupied by legal firm Martin Middleton Oates.



22 Maloney Anderson Legal

70 Deakin Avenue

Again we need to cross Deakin Avenue back to the east side. The site of the first Mildura Shire Office now houses Maloney Anderson Legal. Gazetted in 1890, the first building located here was a two-room wooden structure. The present building was opened in 1922 and served as the Shire Offices until 1971 when the Shire moved to Irymple. In 1995, the City of Mildura, the Shire of Mildura and the Shire of Walpeup amalgamated becoming the Rural City of Mildura (now Mildura Rural City Council).



23 Mildura Police Station and Court House

As a contrast to the older buildings in Deakin Avenue, the police station and court house is one of the newest additions to the streetscape. Opened in 2004, the new complex replaced the previous court house, the CBC Bank and Maples Department Store. In the foyer of the police station are two vibrant paintings by renowned local Indigenous artist Sharon Kirby.



24 George V Memorial Fountain

In the centre plantation at the intersection of Deakin Avenue and Eighth Street, stands the original fountain from Rio Vista, the home of W.B. Chaffey. It was moved to this location in 1936. In 1991, marking the centenary of Rio Vista, the Mildura Shire had a replica fountain forged in Bendigo and erected on the original site in the gardens of the home where it greets visitors today.



25 Old Post Office Building

This was the site of the original Mildura Post Office, built in 1890. The original structure was replaced by the present building with the imposing columns in 1923. In 2000, a new Post Office was built at 36 Orange Avenue. Since then, this building has been used as a bar, restaurant and night club under several different names.



26 Old CBA Bank Building

Now the Art Vault, a vibrant art gallery and workspace for artists in residence, this 1950's style building was a bank and still contains the original bank vault.



27 Mills Court

39-41 Deakin Avenue

Another Art Deco building, Mills Court, is situated between Eighth and Seventh Streets on the west side. This commercial building, completed in 1935, was designed by architect Mr J. Douglas Overend. Influenced by Art Deco styled patterning, it features a symmetrical, stepped upper wall facade with geometric parapet detailing and integrated facade lettering.



28 The Cultivator Building

Deakin Avenue

Past Mills Court stands the imposing single story late Victorian red brick building with a brick and iron palisade fence. The building, complete with light well and basement with access from the street, is the only building of its type in Mildura. Having served several purposes, it was the former offices of the Cultivator newspaper which circulated from 1888 to 1920.

Local identity C.J. DeGaris bought the Cultivator along with the Mildura Telegraph and Merbein Irrigationist and merged them into one paper, The Sunraysia Daily. The "Daily" offices are across the road at 22 Deakin Avenue. This Cultivator building is now part of the La Trobe University Mildura Campus.



29 The Warren

Deakin Avenue

Cross Deakin Avenue. Across the laneway from the Sunraysia Daily, the Commodore Motel stands. However, back in 1888 it was the home of what was known as 'The Warren', an early boarding house. 'The Warren' was demolished in 1965. A plaque commemorating 'The Warren' can be found at the entrance to the motel.

30 Seventh Street Parkland and Fountains



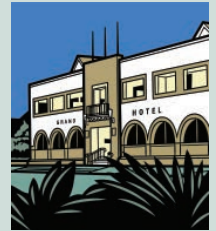
Take a stroll across busy Seventh Street to see the Prince and Princess of Wales Fountain. The fountain was officially opened, or switched on, by Princess Diana during their 1985 visit to Mildura. Much hilarity ensued when the fountain was turned on only to give a hearty spray all over the crowd of journalists and cameramen jostling for position for the best shot.

Located nearby is the Alfred Deakin Memorial, sculpted by Michael Mezzaros and presented to the city to mark the centenary of the irrigation colony in 1987. Have a close look to see a profile of Alfred Deakin's face together with survey lines. These are a representation of fruit blocks as seen from the air and lines representing the irrigation channels that have made farming in this region possible. Trickling water completes this sculpture. Further along the lawns to the east stands the war memorial commemorating those who served in Vietnam, Korea and South East Asia.

31 Mildura Grand Hotel



We have come to the conclusion of the Deakin Avenue walk and what better place to pull up stumps but at the Quality Mildura Grand Hotel. This prominent landmark began life as the Coffee Palace, a temperance establishment. The Chaffey Offices stood alongside in the centremost part of the Seventh Street frontage. Peek behind the gate of the Grand to see the fountain that has graced the gardens from that time. After gaining a liquor licence in 1919, the hotel expanded into its current site and was formally named The Grand in 1920. From then on, the hotel was continuously being rebuilt and today with over 100 rooms, function rooms and several fine restaurants, including the renowned Stefano's Restaurant, it is a substantial icon of the Mildura streetscape.



One of 12 historically significant sites of The Chaffey Trail heritage experience.

For tens of thousands of years, this site was an oasis for the many indigenous groups who travelled along the river and through their country. It then became a pastoral lease in 1847 and an irrigation settlement in 1887. As with all country towns, the streetscape changes over time. Mildura too has grown and changed with the times. The Chaffey's town plan made Deakin Avenue the focal point from which the town evolved and is a constant with its wide boulevard of shady trees and gardens flanked on either side by ever changing buildings. Some structures are new and some remain original, many repurposed from their original intent but all telling a story of a country town's journey through the years.

Today, Mildura is a bustling, modern city.