

“as long as you could see the

**Hoffman's Chimneys**  
you wasn't lost”



**SAVING BRUNSWICK'S BRICKWORKS**

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## About Save the Brickworks

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Save the Brickworks Inc is a community group dedicated to preserving the historic Hoffman's Brickworks site in Dawson Street, Brunswick, an inner Melbourne suburb (Australia).

We are committed to community participation in any decisions affecting the heritage values of the site. It is important that the brickworks remain accessible to the wider community at all times.

## Acknowledgements

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Aenea Himbury compiled this publication. Save the Brickworks thanks her for her energy and creativity.

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We also wish to thank all the contributors to this publication who so generously shared with us their memories, ideas and creativity. A full list of contributors is provided at the back of this booklet.

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# Introduction

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The Hoffman's Brickworks site in Dawson Street has always played a central role in the community life of Brunswick.

The brickworks remain as a lone reminder of a time when the brick, tile and pottery industry spread in an intricate web across Melbourne's northern clay-belt from Brunswick to Northcote and Preston. The clay industry shaped the suburb and its community and in turn, Brunswick bricks helped to build the growing metropolis of Melbourne.

The three chimneys have stood as familiar signposts in the local landscape for more than a hundred years. They recall a time when their smoke only stopped for the weekly washing day, when the morning whistle summoned workers from their homes and the evening whistle heralded their return.

The site's three elliptical Hoffman kilns remain as a testament to the entrepreneurs who first imported new European technology to Australia, facilitating the industrialisation of a national brick-making industry.

The Hoffman's stamp is pressed into the bricks of countless buildings throughout metropolitan Melbourne - famous buildings and workers' housing alike.

The pottery produced ceramic ware which provided sewers, sanitary ware, roofing tiles and functional and decorative items.

The railway siding bisecting the site transported Hoffman's bricks and pipes from the brickworks to construction projects throughout the developing metropolis and the state.

The pay-windows of the site manager's office at the Dawson Street

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*Photo: Werner Voigt*

entrance recall the workers and their campaign for better working conditions, like when they took on the might of the Brunswick brick-making monopoly to march for the 8 hour day.

The vast clay pits which supplied the raw materials for the industry today live on as parks. The street network too was shaped around the many brick, tile and pottery factories and the pits nearby.

Operations ceased at the brickworks in 1993 and the once vibrant and bustling site now lies dormant. Cyclone fencing keeps people out, disconnecting the site from the community that has helped create it.

As part of a current development proposal for the site, much of the brickworks will be restored and an interpretation centre will be established. Sympathetic new uses are being sought to ensure that the brickworks lives on as a functional and vibrant place, open to our community and telling this important Brunswick story.

The purpose of this booklet is to provide glimpses of the many reasons why the Hoffman's brickworks has been and continues to be such an important Brunswick icon. For those who know the site well, these pages may spark your memory or provide a new perspective on the site. Newcomers to Brunswick might be surprised at the many stories behind those ever-present chimneys.

Save the Brickworks hopes that this booklet inspires a respect for the heritage of the brickworks and creates new ideas on how the site might live on into the future.

As former Hoffman's worker and long time Brunswick resident Billy Ottaway puts it "As long as you could see the Hoffman's chimneys, you wasn't lost".

# Community Campaign

## Brickworks group has its say

THE Save the Brickworks group has had a chance to air its concerns about the development of the Hoffman's Brickworks site.

Last week council representatives met members of Save the Brickworks and the Brunswick Community History group, along with the project developers and architects.

Save the Brickworks members

were concerned that units being sold off-the-plan bore little resemblance to those initially approved by the council.

The group asked to meet the council to voice its concerns, which included a desire to see more steel and brick used and mock period details taken out of the design.

Councillor Andy Ingham said he wanted to get the best possible

development and was open to hearing what Save the Brickworks members had to say.

"I think it was quite a fruitful meeting," Cr Ingham said.

It's now open to the group to send in their comments, which will be going to the planning committee February 21. "I think the developer will take on this," Save the Brickworks said.

## Historic kiln

by MARTINE BORRACK

After 14 years of the historic brickworks

demanded under a far-reaching plan to

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The heritage value of the Dawson Street premises of the Hoffman's Brickworks was first formally recognised in the 1982 Brunswick Conservation Study. This study recommended that the site be protected under local, state and national heritage provisions. In 1987 the site was classified by the National Trust. However, it was only after several years of ongoing community pressure that the brickworks was afforded legal protection through the Victorian Heritage Register (in 1989) and the local planning scheme.

Soon after operations ceased at Dawson Street in 1993, the new owners of the site (Sungrove Corporation) proposed a residential development that required the demolition of two of the three historic kilns.

Locals, including members of the Brunswick Community History Group, the Friends of Gilpin Park, former Brunswick Councillors and concerned Brunswick residents were horrified at this proposal and joined together to raise public awareness and to lobby for the conservation of the site. Save the Brickworks Inc. emerged in 1997.

Throughout the campaign Save the Brickworks has worked closely with local residents, Moreland City Council, the National Trust, heritage specialists and the developer to highlight the importance of the site to Brunswick and to the wider Australian and international community. The group has held many community events, including a public picnic, an exhibition of artwork and artifacts, a community workshop and an on-site arts day to draw attention to the need to conserve the place and to promote creative approaches to its future use.

In 1997, as a result of continued commitment to conserving the site by Save the Brickworks and the City of Moreland, approval was granted for

the development to proceed on the condition that only one of the kilns would be demolished. The chimney of this kiln will be retained in situ. For Save the Brickworks this was a significant victory in the campaign, but the demolition of Kiln No.1, the oldest of the three kilns on site and the oldest remaining Hoffman kiln in Australia, is a great loss.

The City of Moreland has pledged a financial contribution towards the restoration of one of the two kilns which will be retained in the development. Save the Brickworks believes this community investment in the site requires a 'return' on Council's financial contribution in the form of community access to and use of the site.

For example, community use of the kiln could include a neighbourhood house, meeting rooms for community groups, University of the Third Age, working studio spaces for artists, a gallery or performance space, to name a few. Ongoing community access inside and outside the kilns, the brick press shed and Interpretation Centre is an essential part of this return.

Save the Brickworks looks forward to ongoing consultation with Council and the developer about possible uses for the kilns and other heritage buildings. The group will continue to advocate strongly for the conservation of the unique heritage values of the brickworks and the need for any future uses to be sympathetic with these values.

"One of the things that has made this project different from other projects we've worked on is the level of commitment – the number of people that really, really care about the site".

*Helen Lardner, Conservation Architect*

"Save the Brickworks had a terrific agenda that was sound both economically and from the position of community points of view. The developer thankfully was sufficiently flexible to see that there was more than one way to approach the project and the Council was prepared to invest the time and energy in consultation that was needed to get a result. So I think it stands as one of the better benchmarks of consultation and the positives that can come out of that".

*Robert McGauran, Architect who developed design guidelines for the brickworks site.*



# The Brick, Tile and Pottery Industry

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Early in the days of the colony of Victoria, the claybelt stretching from Brunswick through Northcote to Preston was identified as a rich source of quality clay to supply the growing city of Melbourne. Brunswick, only three miles from the central city area, was soon established as a thriving base for the brick, tile and pottery industry.

The first Brunswick-made brick is thought to have been produced in 1841 by Thomas Manallack. During the 1850s, John Glew became the first employer of labour in the brick industry in Brunswick. The success of Glew's brickworks attracted many other brickmakers to the area and by the end of the 1860s there was a total of 44 pottery and brickworks using 'hand-made' technology operating in Brunswick.

In 1870 Jenkin Collier, David MacKenzie Barry and William Owen established the Hoffman Patent Brick and Tile Company (later renamed the Hoffman Patent Steam Brick Company) and commenced mechanised brick-making at their Albert Street site. The company later expanded to a second, larger premises in Dawson Street in 1884. By the 1890s Hoffman's was the primary employer in the Brunswick area and the largest brick manufacturer in Victoria.

In response to the 1890s depression, Hoffman's joined with other major brick producers in the area to form a combine – the Co-operative Brick Manufacturers Company – to control prices and establish their monopoly status in the industry. Although the company struggled through this period, they managed to maintain profits while other smaller scale operations throughout the area were forced to closed down.

At the turn of the century, the landscape of Brunswick was a network of chimneys, clay-pits and clay-making operations.

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Aerial view of Brunswick c. 1950 showing Hoffman's Brickworks in Albert Street and Dawson Street.

"Bricks were first made in Brunswick by Thomas Manallack, on Martin's land, at the back of where the Cumberland Hotel now stands... others quickly followed, and brickmaking became the staple industry of Brunswick".

*B Cooke, 1918.*

"The brickworking industry in Brunswick was huge. There were kilns and pit-holes everywhere – most of the parks in Brunswick were claypits and this is the last remaining reminder of that".

*Andy Ingham, City of Moreland Councillor.*

"Brunswick was one of the major brick-producing areas of Melbourne and Victoria and that was recognised when it became the first purely heavy industrial site put on the Victorian Heritage Register".

*David Maloney, National Trust Australia (Victoria).*

# Building Brunswick

The Aboriginal lands between Merri Creek and Moonee Ponds Creek were first subdivided and sold as large farming estates in 1839. In the absence of government coordinated urban planning, Brunswick evolved organically as private landowners constructed roads and subdivided areas within their estates.

Clay was an important construction material in the development of early Brunswick. Phillipstown, to the south east, near Union Street, was settled in the late 1840s by a community of brickmakers. As the clay industry expanded, clay pits and small scale brick and pottery establishments dotted the local landscape.

The reputation of Brunswick's clay industry attracted larger brickmaking companies such as the Hoffman Patent Steam Brick Company, which purchased land within the Dawson Estate in 1870. The increased production capacity of these mechanised brickmaking operations required larger factory sites and larger clay pits to supply them. More people were attracted to the area for employment.

Hoffman's and other large brickmaking firms engaged in land speculation, subdividing large areas of residential allotments for workers' housing. In many cases the companies guarded against competition by placing covenants on the titles to these lots to ensure that occupants could not dig clay or produce bricks on the land.

While the township was taking shape around the brick industry, Brunswick was supplying increasing numbers of bricks for the building boom of Marvellous Melbourne. Many prominent city buildings, such as Parliament House and the Shrine, are said to have been built with

bricks produced at the Hoffman's brickworks. The sewerage of Melbourne was a boon to Hoffman's production of drainage pipes and sanitary ware from the 1880s onwards.



Hoffman's bricks built the Carlton Hotel, Bourke Street, Melbourne.

Photo: Hoffman's Brick and Pottery Collection, Melbourne University Archives.

"Until 1993 Hoffman's was a functioning operating employer of a lot of labour around here. In the early days of this municipality it dictated the subdivision, the streets are named after various people to do with the place and it generated a large amount of the economic activity that sustained this community".

Andy Ingham, City of Moreland Councillor.

"You can still pick up tiles from houses in Camberwell and Kew that were built in the 19th century that have got tiles on them that are from Brunswick".

Peter Fenaughty, Convenor Friends of Gilpin Park and Brunswick resident.

# Hoffman Technology

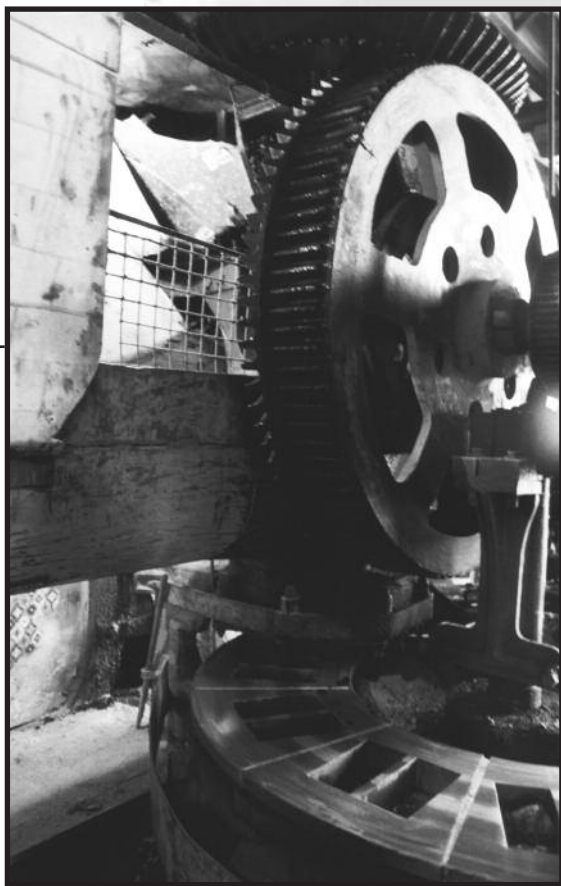
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The Hoffman kiln was developed by Fredrich Hoffman in Stettin, Prussia in 1859. The circular arrangement of its numerous chambers enabled a fuel-saving process of continuous firing - the sequential loading of 'green' (unfired) bricks into the kiln while burnt (fired) bricks were allowed to cool and then removed.

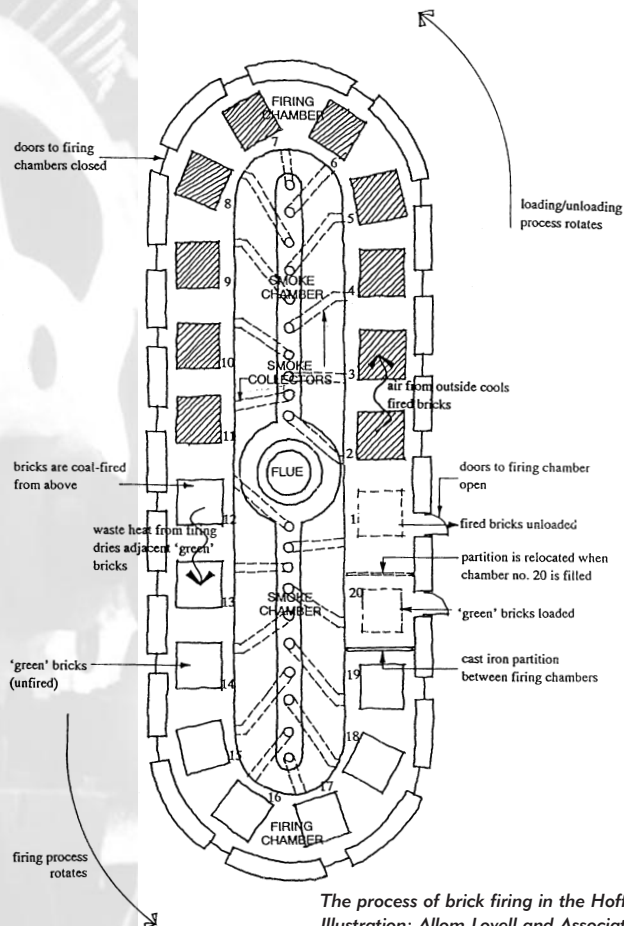
In Australia this technology was first patented by the Hoffman Patent Brick and Tile Company in 1865, only six years after it was invented. By 1870 the company had built the first Australian circular Hoffman kiln at their works in Albert Street, Brunswick. The design was soon adapted from the original circular kiln shape and several elliptical kilns were subsequently erected at both the Albert Street and Dawson Street sites.

In combination with steam-powered Bradley and Craven brick press machines, Hoffman kilns industrialised the brick-making process, establishing Brunswick as a major brick-producing area within the state. The newly developing rail system was employed to transport the increasing volume of bricks produced in Brunswick to construction projects throughout Melbourne and Victoria.

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*The Bradley & Craven brick press. Photo: Ros King.*



*The process of brick firing in the Hoffman Kiln.  
Illustration: Allom Lovell and Associates, 1997.*

"The idea of the Hoffman's kiln was that it would be more efficient - it would change brickmaking from a home industry - a craft industry - into a proper industrial process".

*David Maloney, National Trust Australia (Victoria).*

"The Hoffman Brick Company were real innovators of the time. These guys were at the cutting edge... the 1870s is a really early time for a Hoffman kiln outside of Europe".

*Iain Stuart, Archaeologist.*



# The Pottery

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In addition to bricks the Hoffman Patent Steam and Brick Company also produced a range of commercial and household ceramic ware. Hoffman's was one of the many potteries operating in Brunswick at the turn of the century. By 1902, the company's pottery works, which were producing terracotta pipes and sanitary ware, were the largest in the state. Household ceramic ware was produced from around 1912 onwards.

The pottery operations employed both older style hand-made technology, based on the techniques of England's Staffordshire pottery region, and more modern mass production techniques using slip casting.

Pottery products manufactured at the site included drainage pipes, roofing tiles and chimney pots, sanitary ware, terracotta garden ware, mixing bowls and ginger beer bottles.

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*Melrose Ware from the collection of Bethia Stevenson.*

Hoffman's made a range of decorative household pottery called Melrose Ware which became popular for its distinct blue and green glazes and Australian flora and fauna motifs.



*Photo: Hoffman's Brick and Pottery Collection, Melbourne University Archives.*

"On the one site you had to have the whole ways and means of manufacturing a piece of china or a ceramic article... there would be something like twenty different trades involved".

*Greg Hill, Author of "The Potteries of Brunswick" (2000).*

"That one site encompassed all facets of the industry... in those days Hoffman's did the works, pots, domestic pots, jars, flower pots, toilets, tiles, bricks—the whole lot".  
*Trevor Melksham, union representative and former Hoffman's employee.*

"There was a swelling of national pride during the depression and the 1920s. That seemed to come about at the same time they started making Melrose Ware... so all of a sudden here's all this stuff with gum leaves and possums and koalas on it".

*Greg Hill, Author of "The Potteries of Brunswick" (2000).*



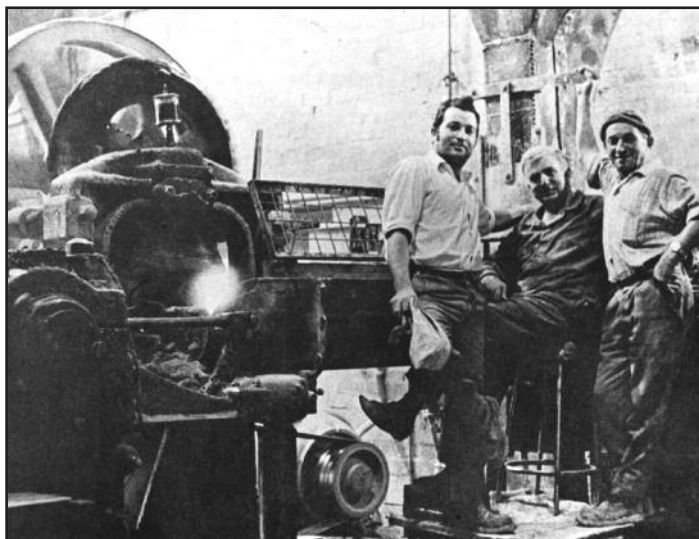
# Working Life

At 7:15 am each day the Hoffman's wake-up whistle summoned employees to a working day from 7:30 am to 5 pm on weekdays and until 11:30am on Saturdays.

Work at the brickworks included mining the clay pits, preparing the clay for use, firing and loading the kilns, pressing and firing bricks, designing, casting and glazing pottery, packaging and loading the finished products and maintaining the machinery used on site. Most jobs at the plant involved heavy manual labour in an often hot and dusty environment.

Hoffman's employees were instrumental in the Brickmakers' and Brickmakers' Labourers' Union campaign. As a result, Hoffman's was the first brickmaking employer to agree to an eight hour day for workers in 1873. A New Years Day procession, complete with speeches, banners and brass bands, culminating in a celebration at the Dawson Street brickworks became an annual event marking this important industry victory. In the 1880s, Hoffman's broke the union over the issue of child labour. A new union, the Victorian Brick, Tile and Pottery Employees Association, was organised to address this and other ongoing industry issues.

Until the site's closure in 1993 there was always a sense of camaraderie between workers, many of whom considered the place a 'home away from home'.



*Workers at Hoffman's Brickworks c 1970.*

*Photo: John Werrett, with permission from Moreland Library.*

"It was a very personal, homey place... They used to fire up the old 44 gallon drum, cook a barbecue and drink a 'plonk' out the back. That was all tolerated because that was the culture of the people who worked there".

*Trevor Melksham, union representative and former Hoffman's employee.*



*Hoffman's Brickworks display for 8 hour day 1909.*

*Photo: Moreland Library.*

"Sir, we are prepared to adopt the eight hours system in our work as far as it is practicable... We agree to this conditionally that no stoppage occurs at our works... Trusting that the eight hours system will prove to be satisfactory to all parties concerned... – The Hoffman Patent Steam Brick Company"

*Letter to the union, 20th December, 1873.*

"If you go into a modern factory, the machines are working flat out but the people are sitting there looking at screens. Whereas [at] Hoffman's there was always someone near enough to talk to".

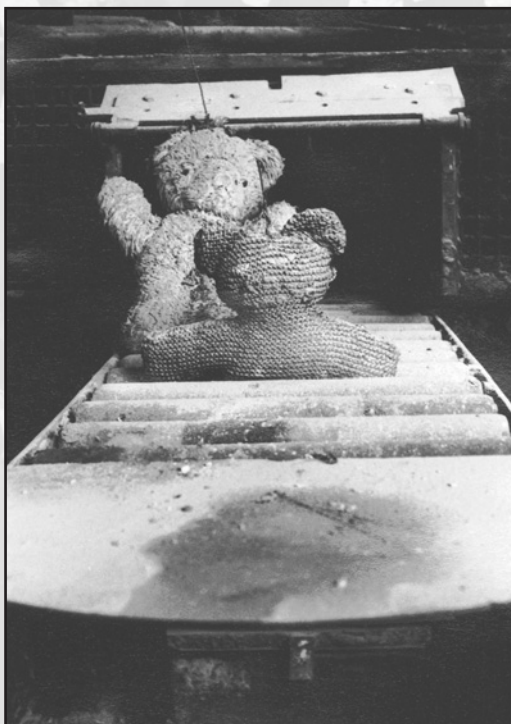
*Trevor Melksham, union representative and former Hoffman's employee.*

# Community Life

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Everyone in Brunswick seems to have a story about 'Hoffies'. Those who lived in the area in the 1920s and 1930s tell of racing boats in the stream of water pumped from the clay pits as it rushed along the gutters. Others recall Mondays when the belching smoke of the chimneys ceased for the weekly washing day; keeping time from the Hoffman's whistles; the ever-present clay dust; the distant glow of the kilns and the constant hum of machinery. Stories endure of a now long buried underground tunnel connecting the Albert Street and Dawson Street clay pits.

Hoffman's Brickworks was a bustling hub of community activity and local identity for over a hundred years. The restoration of this historic landmark offers a chance for the community to once again visit the site and for the brickworks to regain its pivotal place in the community and working life of Brunswick.



*Photo: Erica Lauthier*



*Hoffman's staff and family picnic. Photo: Moreland Library.*

"In that workforce there was a comradeship... When you have a large group of people working together their only strength is in supporting each other... Brunswick is one of the just surviving cities which still has remnants of a community ideology".

*Peter Fenaughty, Brunswick resident and Convenor, Friends of Gilpin Park.*

"The workers had a collection of soft toys hanging from the brick press shed roof. Driving past, I would always check to see if there were any new additions".

*Chris Johnston, Brunswick resident and Save the Brickworks member.*

"It was a really fantastically dynamic place... the blokes [would] hang out with handkerchiefs knotted on their heads... They'd be working when I'd go to work in the morning and the firing would go on into the night".

*Marina Baker, Artist and Brunswick resident.*

"The Grandview Hotel in Pearson Street... was a gathering point for the men that worked at the quarry... They only had from when the whistle blew to six o'clock to drink!".

*Peter Fenaughty, Brunswick resident and Convenor, Friends of Gilpin Park.*

# A Sunset Industry

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Although in its early days Hoffman's had been a leader in industrial innovation, during the 20th century the company became increasingly conservative and was reluctant to embrace technological advances in brickmaking. This ultimately led to the company's demise.

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, the Hoffman Patent Steam Brick Company experienced difficulties which led to the scaling down of its operations. In 1931 the company experienced its first financial loss for 31 years. As clay deposits dwindled, the original Albert Street works were closed down permanently in 1941 and the site was sold. In 1958 the Dawson Street claypit was sold for landfill and eventually converted to parkland in 1986.

In 1960, operations at the Dawson Street site were taken over by Clifton Holdings. Progressively the pottery works at the site were closed down. In 1986 the site was sold again, this time to Nubrik. Brickmaking ceased in 1993 and in 1996 the site was sold to Sungrove Corporation, the current owner of the site. The brickworks have not operated since this time.

As Brunswick evolves from a traditionally working class, industrial suburb into a diverse inner city community, the restoration of the brickworks provides an opportunity to ensure that this important part of the area's history lives on into the future.

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Photo: Erica Lauthier.

"Brunswick's a place that's changing really quickly... and it's really important that we maintain that link to our industrial heritage so that people remember where this municipality came from".

*Andy Ingham, City of Moreland Councillor.*

"When I lived in Albert Street in the 1980s, all around this area were iron mongeries, scrap metal places and the liquorice factory down on the other side of the railway line. There were all sorts of what were called sunset industries, those old world, last-century-almost industries. They were the last vestiges of those in Brunswick".

*Marina Baker, Artist and Brunswick resident.*

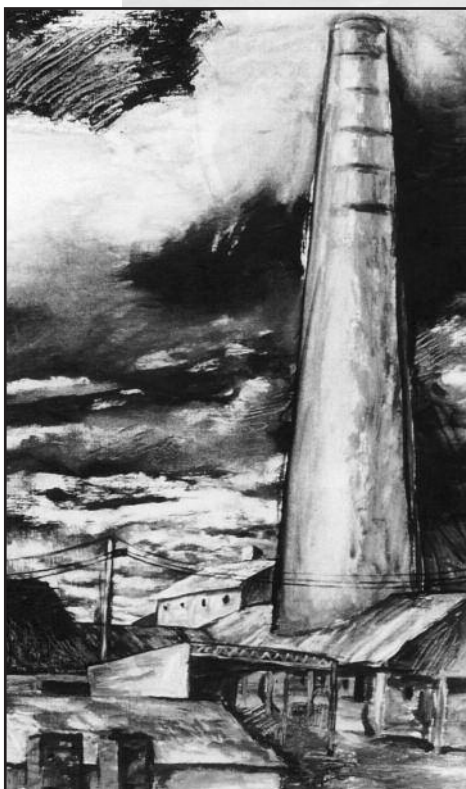
# Firing the Imagination

The three chimneys and the impressive architecture of the Hoffman kilns and buildings have long served as a source of inspiration to artists in Brunswick.

Around the turn of the century, local painters depicted Hoffman's Brickworks set within the Brunswick countryside.

Today, the evocative image and spaces of the brickworks inspire a new generation of established and emerging local artists. An exhibition organised in 1997 by Save the Brickworks displayed a range of visual artwork inspired by the site, including drawings, paintings, sculpture and photography. The brickworks have also served as an exciting venue for film, television, performance art, theatre and the Women's Circus.

*Original artwork by Marina Baker.*







Original artwork by Werner Voight.

"I think it's got an atmosphere there that you couldn't manufacture if you wanted to".

*Geoff Hogg, Artist and Brunswick resident.*

"It feels very ancient somehow... the tiles on the inside of the kilns [have] had over a hundred years of firing... so the glaze on the bricks is just amazing... [it's] baked with this incredible patina of time".

*Marina Baker, Artist and Brunswick resident.*

"The kilns... look more like Roman ruins or a Roman cistern... than a factory. It's quite a spooky and ghostly site".

*Massimo Palombo, Artist and Brunswick resident.*

"I think it's rare to see such beautiful examples of industrial buildings. It just reinforces in my own mind how good industrial buildings can be. They're very heroic forms that created potentially fantastic urban spaces".

*Robert McGauran, Architect.*

# Into the Future

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The pending redevelopment of Hoffman's Brickworks will involve restoring many of the heritage buildings on the site. An Interpretation Centre will be created to tell the story of the brickworks to visitors. New uses are being sought for the kilns and other key buildings and spaces to ensure that the brickworks remains an active community place.

The Conservation Management Plan for the site sets out principles that will guide future re-use of the site. The most important of these principles states that any future use should respect the site's heritage value, reflect its value to the local community, acknowledge the site's attributes and limitations, be compatible with surrounding uses and take into account market demand and commercial viability to ensure a commercial return. Suggested uses include office space, meeting rooms, retail, café or restaurant, residential, a neighbourhood centre or community arts uses.

A feasibility study will determine the level of income the site will need to generate to pay for ongoing maintenance costs. The findings of this study will help shape any future use of the site.

*Workers at the Hoffman's Brickworks, 1939. Photo: Moreland Library.*



The unique architecture and open spaces within the brickworks complex provide opportunities for many different uses to find a home on the site. Innovative ideas and community commitment are needed to translate this opportunity into thoughtful new uses for the site to ensure that the brickworks survive and thrive into the future.

"The first objective should be to preserve the most important parts of the fabric of that place".

*David Maloney, National trust Australia (Victoria).*

"Trying to find practical functional uses for spaces and buildings is really important, so it is a living place—making the best of the physical remnants that you have there – being able to interpret them and make them live for visitors".

*Diana Stewart, Events Manager, Gasworks Arts Park.*

"It's a pity if suburbs start to have a sort of social amnesia where one use simply supersedes another. But I think we're at a point now where the places where we live can act as a type of social memory. The Hoffman's site's a really good opportunity for that".

*Geoff Hogg, Artist and Brunswick resident.*

"I'd like to see a use that keeps people coming on to the site for different reasons and perhaps discovering more each time they go, rather than visiting for the once off museum experience".

*Helen Lardner, Conservation Architect.*

"This is an opportunity for a community, Council and property developers to work together to create mutual benefit".

*Lissa Kennedy, Enterprise Development Consultant.*

# Save the Brickworks Our Vision

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Save the Brickworks is actively involved in lobbying for the conservation of the Hoffman's Brickworks. An important aspect of the significance of the site is the central role it has played in the community life of Brunswick. The community now has an opportunity to reclaim the brickworks – to re-open it and re-introduce it into community life.

Save the Brickworks is committed to a community vision for the brickworks:

- Quality interpretation for visitors which communicates the full range of values the site holds for locals and the wider community.
- Low impact uses for the kilns and other important buildings which respect and enhance their heritage values.
- Ongoing public access and community activity within the site so that the brickworks lives on as a vibrant and functional activity centre.

Save the Brickworks has been exploring the idea of community arts uses for the site, including artists' studios and workshops, along with arts offices, performance and exhibition spaces. These ideas have received an enthusiastic response from many members of the local arts community. The evocative environment of the brickworks could act as a focus for artistic and community life and inspire a whole new generation of Brunswick residents.

Hoffman's Brickworks is important to the community of Brunswick for many different reasons. Save the Brickworks remains committed to ongoing community participation in any decisions regarding the future of this important community landmark.

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*Women's Circus at Hoffman's Brickworks, 1995. Photo: Viv Mehers.*

"I'd love to see that wall out the front come down. For the site just to be a relic and a dead space would be an insult to the lively kind of place it's been in the past. Letting places like the brickworks become derelict is like wiping all those people's history and how we got here, so I'd hope that there's some life in the old place yet!"

*Marina Baker, Artist and Brunswick resident and Save the Brickworks member.*

"I think the brickworks had a very positive impact on the municipality, employment-wise and economically – but it also had a negative environmental one. Now there can be a positive environmental impact by providing a very positive contribution to community development".

*Andy Ingham, City of Moreland Councillor and first convenor of Save the Brickworks.*

"It's got potential to be a real focus for the artistic energy of the area – it can really inspire people because of it's uniqueness and it's history, rooted in the history of Brunswick".

*Massimo Palombo, Artist and Brunswick resident.*

# Farewell to Kiln No.1

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Kiln No.1 at Hoffman's will soon be demolished to make way for a residential development on the northern section of the site.

This elliptical Hoffman kiln measures approximately 65m x 23m and runs north-south at the centre of the site. The lower level of the kiln contains a continuous vaulted annular firing chamber (consisting of 16 sub-sections), featuring semi-circular openings ('wickets') around its external wall. The kiln's chimney rises through the centre of the upper level firing floor. The kiln is constructed of red bricks and the firing chambers are lined with fire bricks.

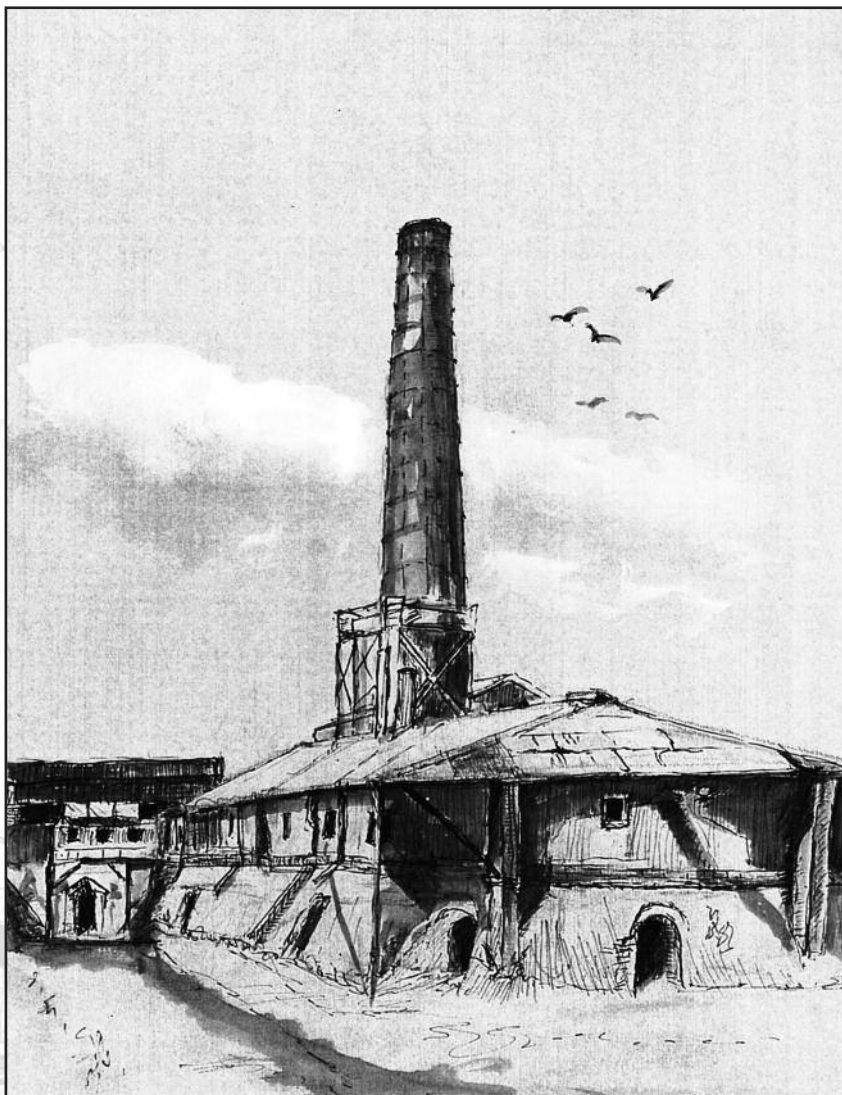
It is the oldest remaining Hoffman kiln in Australia and is certainly one of the oldest in the world.

Following demolition, the chimney will be retained in situ and the kiln's footprint marked to acknowledge its importance within the brickworks complex.

Save the Brickworks respectfully acknowledges the passing of a great Brunswick icon.







*Original artwork by Werner Voigt.*

"In the late afternoon, that kiln that we've lost gets all the western sunlight and you get that brilliant light often against a steely sky in Brunswick. It's a beautiful burnt sienna colour and it's just fantastic!"

*Marina Baker, Artist and Brunswick resident.*



# List of Contributors

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**Marina Baker** is an artist and local Brunswick resident and member of Save the Brickworks. In 1997, Marina curated the Save the Brickworks exhibition 'The Fire Once Lighted is Never Extinguished'.

**Andy Ingham** is a Councillor for the City of Moreland and was the original convenor of Save the Brickworks.

**David Maloney** is the Industrial Heritage Officer for the National Trust Australia (Victoria). David first became involved with the Brickworks when he campaigned to have the site listed on Victoria's Historic Buildings Register.

**Diana Stewart** is the Events Manager at Gasworks Arts Park in Albert Park. In 1999 she spoke about re-using heritage buildings at the Save the Brickworks Arts Day.

**Geoff Hogg** is an artist who has lived in Brunswick for 16 years. His work includes public art around the theme of the clay industry in Brunswick.

**Greg Hill** is recognised as a leading authority on Australian Pottery. He has recently published a book entitled 'The Potteries of Brunswick'. He has many pieces of Hoffman's pottery in his personal collection.

**Helen Lardner** is the conservation architect who assembled a team of consultants which developed the Conservation Management Plan for the Hoffman's Brickworks.

**Iain Stuart** is an archaeologist who was part of the team which developed the Conservation Management Plan for the site. In 1988 Iain wrote a report on the brickworks for the Victoria Archaeological Survey and has maintained an interest in the site ever since.

**Lissa Kennedy** is an enterprise development consultant who is advising the Melbourne City Council on facilitating a synergy between business and the arts.

**Massimo Palombo** is a painter, sculptor and installation artist who lives in a communal studio space close to the brickworks.

**Peter Fenaughty** is a long time Brunswick resident who is currently convenor of the Friends of Gilpin Park (adjacent to the brickworks).

**Erica Lauthier** photographed the site after it closed in 1993.

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**Robert McGauran** is an architect who developed design guidelines for the Brickworks in consultation with the developer, Council, Save the Brickworks and other community representatives.

**Grant Hobson** is a photographer who took many photographs at Hoffman's during the early 1990s while it was still operating. His work was part of the "Old Ways Series" conducted in partnership with the State Library of Victoria.

**Werner Voigt** is a painter who has lived in Brunswick for many years. He has painted the brickworks many times and some of these paintings featured in the Save the Brickworks exhibition in 1997.

**Trevor Melksham** is the Secretary of the Clay and Ceramics Divisional Branch, Construction and Maintenance Division of the Construction, Mining, Forestry and Energy Union (CFMEU). As a teenager he worked at Hoffman's brickworks and later spent time there in his position as the Federal Secretary and Victorian Branch Secretary of the (former) Brick Tile and Pottery Union.

**Viv Mehers** photographed the Women's Circus when they performed at the brickworks in 1995.

**Bethia Stevenson** owns a large collection of Hoffman's pottery given to her by her grandfather, Thomas Stevenson, who worked at the site.

**Patricia Cunningham-Puiu** was born in Barry Street, Brunswick and lived on the corner of Barry and Union Street until she married. She now lives in N.S.W.

**Kathleen Moore** is a Brunswick resident and published poet. She is an active member of the Brunswick Poetry Workshop.

**Fonda Zenofon** is a published poet who was appointed Hon. Poet Laureate of Brunswick in 1983. He is a founding member of the Brunswick Poetry Workshop and is currently the Convenor of the group.

**Chris Johnston** is a long time Brunswick resident and member of Save the Brickworks. She has a keen interest in the local history of Brunswick.

**Ros King** is a photographer. She was artist in residence with the Brunswick Community History Group in the early 1980's.

Many thanks to:

**The University of Melbourne Archives** for their co-operation and permission to reproduce images from their Hoffman's Brick and Pottery Collection featured in this publication.

**Ann Brown** and **Moreland Library** for permission to use photographs of the brickworks from the local history collection.

**Save the Brickworks** Committee members – Terese Healy (Convenor), Marina Baker, Andrew Brophy, Fay Dunn, Chris Johnston, Sue Kelly and Carmel Ward.

**Lou Garita** (on behalf of Sungrove Corporation) for permission to launch this publication at the brickworks.

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Helen Penrose (ed.), *Brunswick: One History Many Voices*, South Melbourne, 1994.

Gregory Hill, *The Potteries of Brunswick*, Shepparton Art Gallery, 2000.

Iain Stuart, *The Former Hoffman Brick and Pottery Works*, Victoria Archaeological Survey, 1988.

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# How to Get Involved

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Save the Brickworks Inc (A003777IT) will continue to liaise with the developer, the City of Moreland and consultants engaged by Council about the future development of the Hoffman's Brickworks and any proposals for adaptive re-use of the site and its heritage areas.

Save the Brickworks welcomes input from those who are interested in conserving the heritage values of the site and from anyone who may have interesting ideas about its future use.

Please contact:

The Convenor

Save the Brickworks

C/o 21 Pearson Street

West Brunswick 3055

Ph: 9380 5554

or look for the Save the Brickworks web page on the Community Links page of Moreland City Council's site.

([www.moreland.vic.gov.au/](http://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/))

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I imagine everyone who lived in the district has the same reaction: the knockoff whistle signalling it was time to put the tea on . . . . the men walking tiredly down the street – some wheeling their bikes, for a bit of male bonding at the Union Hotel, the women rushing to bring their clothes in when the northerlies struck, shaking the brick dust from their washing . . . . we children locked inside the tightly closed houses while the red grit penetrated every crevice. . .

Nostalgia aside, the impression I had was one of community, of mutual support, and decent hardworking lives with purpose. We had little, but the joy of rushing to float paper boats in the overflowing gutters when the waters were released remains with me.

*Patricia Cunningham-Puiui, former Brunswick resident.*

Hoffman's Brickworks has touched our hearts,  
Now it's time to preserve some parts.  
The first kiln constructed for sure,  
Way back in 1884.

In Brunswick I grew up and live,  
And still find it evocative.  
Technology has increased pace,  
Yet it's still an inspiring place.

We've all been touched by the Brickworks,  
With all its beauty, all its quirks.  
Walking by or driving a car:  
Overwhelmed by its nostalgia.

*Extract from a poem entitled "Firing the Kilns of Our Hearts" by Fonda Zenofon.*

Here's to Hoffman's Brickworks,  
I just love that site.  
Passed by it every morning,  
What a local delight!

*Extract from a poem entitled  
"That Great Old Site" by Kathleen Moore.*



*Photo: Moreland Library*

"What happens over the next few years will be the first stage, hopefully, of something that our children or our grandchildren will be talking about in a hundred years time. That's what I'd like to see – that the brickworks continues to be a living place that continues as it has in the past – to adapt to the challenges of the future whilst preserving what's special about it".

*Robert McGauran, Architect.*

