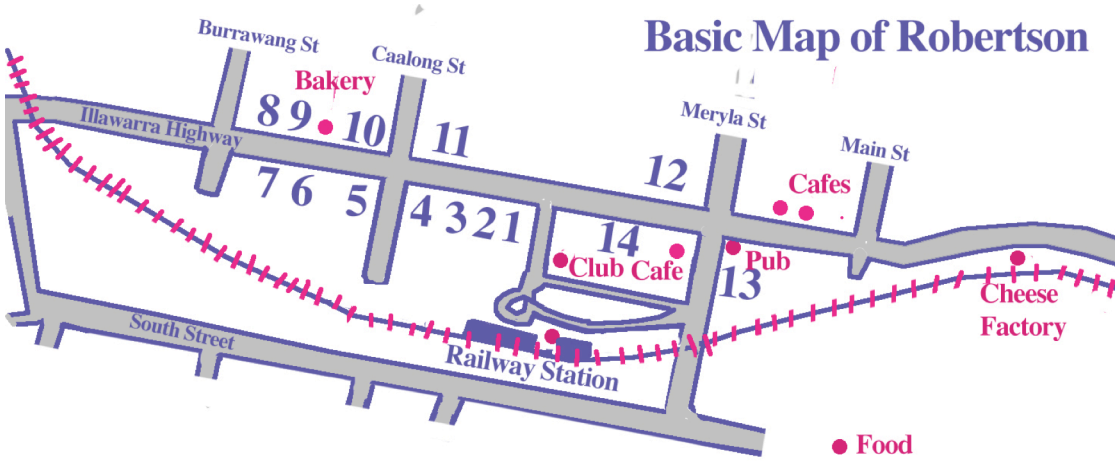

Heritage Wa…

1. The Old Post Office. This building, with a lower stone floor and a timber upper storey, was completed in 1896. Mail came from Bowral six times a week by horseback until 1900 when horse drawn vehicles were used. The telephone was connected to the Post Office in 1914. The building was one of those in the village damaged in the 1961 earthquake, opening after repairs with the current, altered façade. The Post Office operated here until 1994 and it is now a private residence.

2. The Police Station. This was built in 1887 with a Court of Petty Sessions established the following year. There were police cells at the back and the bailiff lived in the village. The paddocks behind the Police Station were for the police horses but in 1970 these were added to the school grounds for playing fields.

3. The School of Arts. The original stone building was completed in 1886 with the western annex as the library. The front wall of this annex to the original building can still be seen behind the war memorial. Eventually the hall proved too small for the growing community, so in 1935 a fund was established to enlarge it. A new front section was added, as well as the stage, and it opened with a ball in November 1939. After the war it also operated for many years as a popular local cinema, until television came along.

4. The Robertson Public School. In 1869 a letter was sent to the government asking for a school. It said " there is a reserve for a village with no person living in it, but it is at the centre of a large population, a great number of whom are children." The community then had to clear half the site, piling up the trees they cut down onto the other half. By 1872 the stone school building was built as a single classroom and teacher's residence, under the one roof. For the first few years the schoolroom was the focal point for the community, because it was the only building big enough for social functions. A headmaster's residence was built near the corner in 1891, and this is now the administration building.

5. The Light Horse Gallery. This building, across Caalong Street, has been in use since the 1890s, starting as an Auctioneer's office and as the Orderly Room for a half squadron of the Australian Light Horse. It was Henningham's General Store from the 1930s, bought by the Dairy Farmers Co-op in the 1950s. For 34 years, from 1968 to 2002, it was St Anthony's Roman Catholic Church. It was occupied by Elder's Real Estate before being extensively and sensitively restored as the Light Horse Gallery.

6 . The Church Building. The first Wesleyan slab church was built here from trees cut on the site in the early 1870s, replaced by a later church in 1888. The present church was opened in 1902 and the hall added in 1932. It was the Methodist Church which became the Uniting Church in 1977 but has recently ceased to be used as a church. The Parsonage next door, built in 1896, is now a private residence.

7. Small Shop. The first shop built on this site in 1884 was Warby's General Store. About 1914 it became Graham's Store "a two storey, weatherboard building with glass showcases, which sold fashionable items such as hats and shoes." In 1927 it was still described as a "very large shop with a two storied store at the rear." All this had gone by 1938 when this new, smaller shop was built for Arthur Vandenbergh. The Dairy Farmers Co-op. bought it in the 1950s and for many years, after they left, it was a hardware shop called The Builders Barn.

8. **Antiques shop.** Across Hoddle Street, there was a small cottage on the site of the present Service Station until the 1970s. The first Garage in Robertson was where Robertson Recollections is now and was run by L. A. Jones from 1925. There were no petrol pumps until 1927 and cars drove through the big double doors to get fuel from drums. Before the train line was built, Jones's Hudson cars provided a service to bring visitors from Moss Vale to and from Ranelagh House (now Robertson Hotel) as well as providing the mail service.

9. **Robertson Doctor to the Bakery.** These shops were originally Grocery and Green Grocer's shops which were extensively refurbished in the 1990s, and have had various businesses since. The Southern Rise Bakery was the site of the Saddler's shop in the early 1900s but for many years it was the village Butcher's shop, burnt down in 1933 but rebuilt. It only became the Bakery in the last 10 years.

10. Pizzas in the Mist. The unoccupied shop was the Barber and Tobacconist shop from the early 1890s for many years, and later from 1930 to 1951 a Drapery and Haberdashery shop. Further on, the long, narrow building was the Baker's shop and residence from as early as 1900. There has always been a store where Pizzas in the Mist is now. It was William Graham's General Store from the 1890s and later Arthur Vandenbergh's store from the late 1920s to the late 1930s.

11. Hampden Park. Dedicated as a public park in 1897, was named after Lord Hampden, Governor of NSW from 1895-1899.

12. St. John's Church. Built of stone from nearby Glenquarry, the church was completed in 1876, at a time when there were few other buildings in the village. The Rectory was completed in 1921.

13. Robertson Inn. The Hotel, on the other side of Hoddle St., was built in 1887 and originally known as the Criterion Hotel. It is now the only hotel remaining from the several hotels and boarding houses of the early days. Then, when people would have travelled all day to get here, they needed somewhere to stay overnight and stables for their horses.

14. Robertson Farm Machinery. For nearly 50 years, from 1886, this was the site of the Royal Hotel which burnt down in 1934. For many years, until recently, this was Murrays Tractors. The adjacent substantial building was completed in 1900 for the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney, later being used as a local office of the National Australia Bank until 1995.

Two walks

1. West: From railway precinct, pass Club to corner (opposite Motel) then walk the circuit from 1 to 11, then return back to the railway past the Motel and Club.

2. East: From railway precinct, out to Meryla St, turn left into Illawarra Highway to number 14, return past 12, continue east past Pub (13), up to Cheese Factory, and re-trace steps to return to railway.