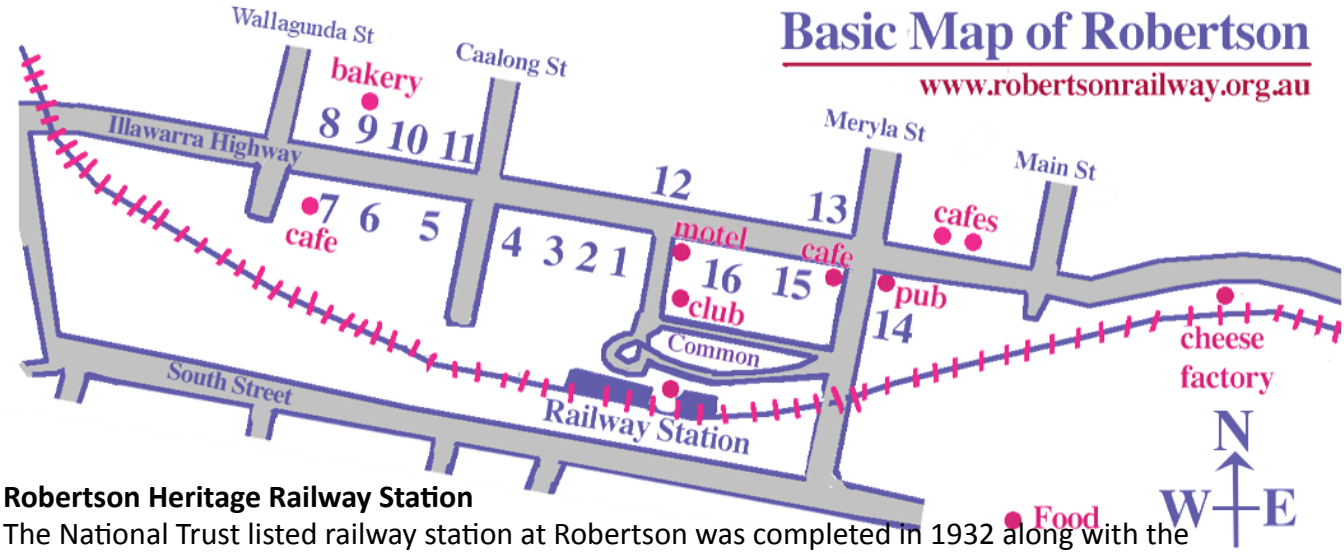

Robertson Heritage Railway Station

The National Trust listed railway station at Robertson was completed in 1932 along with the Unanderra-Moss Vale Railway Line. This rare intact group of buildings is a significant example of the use of pre-cast buildings designed by NSW railway engineers, with pre-fabricated 'rusticated' concrete slabs slotted into pre-cast posts. The Station currently houses a small history display and is maintained by the community volunteers of Robertson Heritage Railway Station Inc .

Two Heritage Walks:

West: From the station, walk past the Bowling Club to the corner (opposite motel) then turn left and follow the circuit from 1 to 13, then return to the railway past 15, 16 and the motel and club.

East: From the railway precinct, walk east past the Common to Meryla St, turn left and left again at the corner of Illawarra Highway to number 16, return past 15, continue east past the Pub (14), up to the Cheese Factory, and re-trace steps to return to railway.

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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. 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 and operating until 1994. 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 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.

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 and for the first few years was the focal point for community 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 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. Then 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, until the present church was opened in 1902. and the hall added in 1932. It was a Methodist Church which became a 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 large 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" but all this had gone by 1938 when the 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. Now a coffee roaster and café.

8. Antiques shop. The first Garage in Robertson was where the antique shop is now, run by L. A. Jones from 1925 to 1948. 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. The Bakery. The site of the Saddler's shop in the early 1990s but for more than 70 years it was the village Butcher's shop. It only became the Bakery since 2000.

10. Old Shop. This was the Barber and Tobacconist shop from the early 1890s for many years and later from 1930 to 1951 a Drapery and Haberdashery.

11. Pizzas in the Mist. 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. At one time it included a Billiard Saloon.

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

13. 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 1924.

14. 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.

15. 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.

16. The Bank. 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. It is now a private residence.

Cheese Factory. Opening in 1936 the Factory produced Robertson Cheese from local milk until it closed in 1989.