

Hey, hey, Heywood



Harris Rosenbloom's original store in Heywood, now the Heywood Town and Country store.

By Carol Altmann

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ravelling from Warrnambool to Adelaide, it is easy to bypass Heywood because it takes that extra bit of time and effort to detour into the main street: but it is worth it.

Heywood has less than 1400 people, but what it lacks in size, it makes up for in character, such as that found at the Heywood bakery.

The Heywood bakery, like many small town bakeries, offers old-fashioned service, homemade scones and good coffee with the sort of enthusiasm and cheerfulness that makes you think they are living in the best place in the world, and maybe they are.

The bakery is right in the main street, Edgar St, which crosses the picturesque Fitzroy River and has a sweet little

picnic area right on the riverbanks. Across from the bakery is the historic former Heywood primary school, now used as the town library, which has been restored and looks gorgeous.

When it comes to history, however, it is hard to beat the building which houses Heywood Horse and Country, also in the main street.



Denise Farrugia outside the reproduced facade of the Rosenbloom store.

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[/dropcap]he original bluestone building dates back to at least 1854, which is when Heywood became a town, and was operated as a general store by a Mr Avery.

In 1862, the business was bought by Heywood pioneer and merchant Harris Rosenbloom, who emigrated from Poland in 1857 and died a very wealthy man in 1887.

The Harris Rosenbloom rags-to-riches story has fascinated the current owner of the building, Fred Wilson (from [Kaz's Googs, Bluestone Magazine](#) 2/11), who has set about recreating and

restoring as much of the original building as possible since taking it over from Foodworks.

The southern wall is the original bluestone that has been sandblasted and restored, while Fred built a new bluestone wall at the rear to recreate the Rosenbloom façade.

“Unfortunately I couldn’t touch the front due to building regulations, so I have made a replica at the back,” he said.

Harris Rosenbloom went on to make his fortune through sawmilling and, in addition to his shop, owned two sawmills that employed 40 men. When he died, he had an estate worth more than £20,000, at a time when the weekly wage was £2.

Many of the goods he sold in his store are, in their modern equivalent, sold by [Heywood Horse and Country](#) today: hats, bridles, horse feed, boots and buckles.



The former Heywood Primary School building: part of the town’s rich history.

Denise Farrugia opened the business earlier this year and,

like Fred, appreciates the deep history of the building.

“It is wonderful what Fred has managed to do. This was a condemned building at one point,” she said.