

PUBLIC TOUR BOOKLET

**BUS TOUR
BICYCLE RIDE
OR
WALK**

AROUND BEAUTIFUL RUTHERGLEN

ACTIVE INDIGO



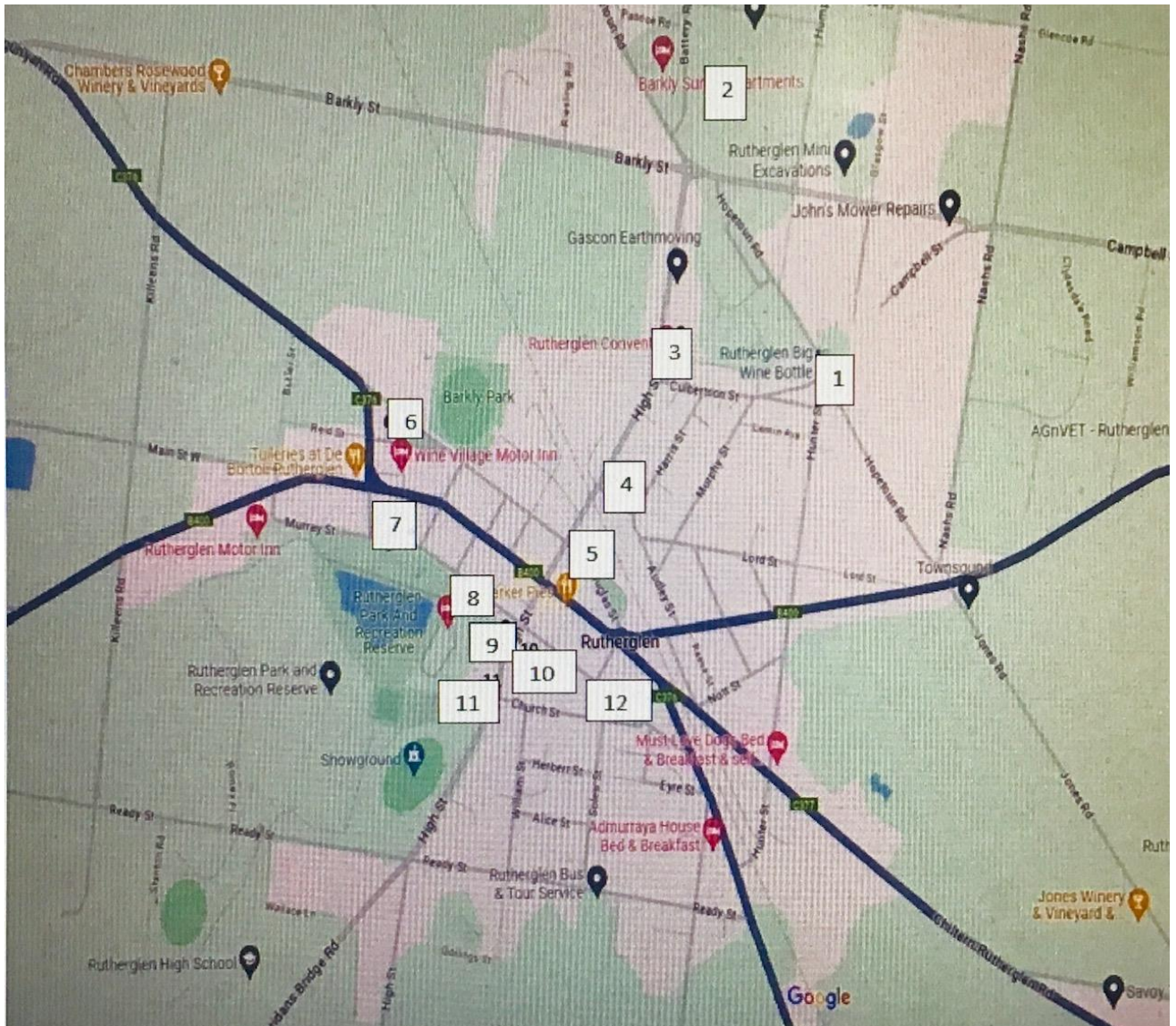
Rutherglen Historical Society@2023. Edition 1.

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**THERE ARE TWELVE SITES YOU MAY VISIT,
SEE UP CLOSE AND GET TO KNOW SOME OF
THE SIGNIFICANT HISTORY ABOUT EACH ONE
OF THEM – ENJOY!**

1. Up to the Wine Bottle – the old town water supply
2. The Rutherglen State Gold Battery – an old gold processing plant
3. Mt Carmel Convent
4. The historic Congregational Church Manse
5. Historic hospital – called the Nurse Nicholas Hospital (now Coral tree)
6. The Discovery of Gold Obelisk/Cairn, Drummond St and MV H'way
7. Lake King – first water supply, old swimming pool, recent sculptures
8. The Memorial Gardens – the various service memorials
9. The Soldiers Memorial Town Hall
10. Lodge 188 Freemasons Victoria
11. The Rutherglen Court House
12. The Rutherglen Common School Museum

FOLLOW THE ROUTE NUMBERS



1. The Rutherglen Wine bottle – the old town water supply

45 Campbell Street Rutherglen 3685

The water tower, which is now affectionately called the ‘The Wine Bottle’ was completed in 1900 and held 72,000 gallons to supply the town’s water. The tower became a backup supply once the new reservoir was constructed in 1945.

The mesh top section was erected in December 1969 with funds from the Rutherglen Wine Festival (thereafter called Rutherglen Winery Walkabout and more recently Roam Rutherglen Winery Walkabout). From a distance it gives the effect of a large wine bottle.

The Wine Bottle is now the perfect spot to have a picnic, or a rest stop while walking or cycling around the area where you can enjoy the views of Mount Buffalo and Chiltern Ironbark Forest.

The builders constructing the brickwork for the tower were John Gray and Fallowfield Wilson Stubbs, both Rutherglen residents. The bricks were supplied from Glasgow’s brick works once situated along Glasgow Road, located near the tower.



2. The Rutherglen State Gold Battery

Battery Road Rutherglen – Door code 5942

The Rutherglen State Gold Battery was erected in 1908 for the purpose of crushing quartz from nearby reefs to extract gold. The Battery required 3,000 gallons of water to crush 10 tons of quartz. In August of 1910, the steam engine was replaced with a suction gas engine of 16 horsepower, which enabled the Battery to crush 10 tons of quartz in 16 hours at one-sixth of the cost of the steam engine.

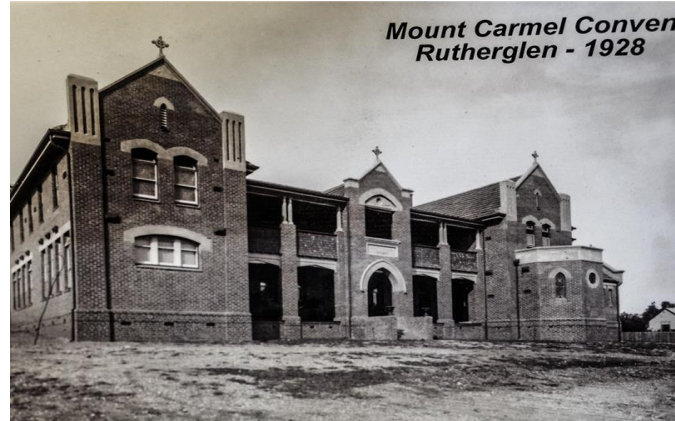
The door access code to the viewing picture deck is 5942 so enjoy the short video presentation of the workings and travel back in time to see how production worked in the early gold history of the area.



3. The Mount Carmel Convent

50-74 High Street Rutherglen

Opened in 1928 with ten Presentation Sisters in residence, the Convent provided primary, secondary, and musical education as well as accommodation for resident students until its closure in 1989. More recently the Convent now serves as a private residence and a bed and breakfast business.



4. The Congregational Manse

104-106 High Street Rutherglen

The Manse was established in 1881 as an attachment to the then Congregational Church next door. It has had an interesting history throughout its lifetime, with a couple of questionable deaths related to past residents, both historically and in more recent timeframes.

It is a beautiful old demonstration of an early building. Various people who have resided within it over the years have described it as being a lovely old home, cosy and not at all spooky as reputation and folk lore has determined across 142 years.



5. The old hospital – once owned by Nurse Nicholas (formerly Coral tree Antiques)

128 High Street Rutherglen

Initially opened as a clothing store in 1895 this lovely old building has had several lifetimes reinventing itself with various owners. After the clothing store and 1897 onwards, Nurse Nicholas ran her hospital in this building. Nurse Nicholas was part of the Nicholas family, the original brothers who discovered the ingredients and manufacture of Aspirin. After its hospital days the building then became a bank, an Antique store and now a beautiful private residence.



6. The Discovery of Gold - Commemorative Obelisk/Cairn

Murray Valley Highway and Drummond Streets.

The obelisk with a lamp commemorates the discovery of gold near this site.

Rutherglen was once in the Wahgunyah pastoral run that was taken up by John Foord in 1841. On the 7th of September 1860 gold was discovered by brothers named Mitchell and Keen, along with an unnamed person (the Keen spelling has never been correctly determined) and thereafter Wahgunyah Rush exploded. The township grew massively with the throng of miners travelling to this new gold field, located about ten kilometres to the south-east of Wahgunyah. A hotel proprietor and entrepreneur named John Wallace brought a portable hotel building to the goldfield (The Empire, then later called The Star) and the growing township was named after his Scottish birthplace, Rutherglen.

Within a year it was estimated that the population on the Rutherglen gold diggings was upwards of 15,000. The township was firstly referred to as the Wahgunyah Diggings, then Barkly, followed by what we know today – Rutherglen. There were many calico tents erected to conduct business, travelling circuses and theatres along with various and movable churches and schools. At one estimate there were over 27 hotels dotted around the township and surrounds of Rutherglen.

Life on the Gold Leads was brutal, lawless, and exhausting. There was only one detective and four constables originally situated at the Wahgunyah Diggings (Rutherglen), and one travelling Magistrate, Magistrate Drummond, who was as infamous for his behaviour as he was for his death, which was by snake bite through his own misadventure.



7. Lake King

Murray Street Reserve Parkland Rutherglen

The 1.2km Arthur Mann Scenic Walk around Lake King is adjacent to the caravan Park. Lake King is a manmade lake named after Daniel King, a local boot maker and later vigneron, who was an active community member and advocate for its construction. Planning for the Lake began in 1864 and it was used for sport and recreation but was decommissioned as a water supply for Rutherglen in 1899.

There are some beautiful sculptures recently embedded (approx.2021) within the lake surrounds relating to highly regarded local Aboriginal Artist Tommy McRae who died in 1901 (**known as Yackaduna**). The information signage has his name recorded as Yackadun; however, his name is recorded historically by significant agencies as **Yackaduna**.

Tommy McRae was also known as Tommy Barnes earlier in his life (*note: this research is under review by academics as at 2023*), particularly when he was a young jackeroo working on the large cattle runs surrounding this area, the Brocklesby run, the Quat Quatta, Collendina, and the Gooramadda.

Interestingly, Tommy McRae never frequented Lake King, Lake King was not a traditional food source for him and the Lake Moodemere people. His home, wider family, and fellow Indigenous community members were situated at Lake Moodemere, along the Sunday Creek and also across the Murray on the Corowa shore areas. There is a small creek run off from Sunday Creek known as the Tommy McRae Creek and walk area.

The significant point to note was how talented Tommy McRae was, how he managed to adapt and work within two worlds. He was intelligent and well respected by some of the local landowners and vigneronns that were in his circle of friends, supporting and encouraging his talents through his art. These sculptures/statues are a marvellous testament and tribute to his work and entity around this area and were proudly initiated by Arts Rutherglen.



8. The Memorial Gardens

Murray Street Reserve Parkland Rutherglen

The beautiful memorial gardens are held dear within the heart of the town. They serve as a memorial to the fallen, people who have served and people still serving in the Australian Defence Forces.

There is an obelisk to the fallen of WW1, a WW2 service board, a Vietnam remembrance and more recently an addition of a Timor veteran remembrance. The WW1 obelisk was firmly implanted in the spot you see today in 1921, along with the memorial guns.

The guns themselves are 32 pounders, 42cwt (8 footers) and are smooth bore muzzle loading. These guns have never been used in naval warfare. The guns are Known as Monk

Pattern C class. They were finally established on safe concrete supports where they are seen today at the Rutherglen Park in Murray Street in the early part of January 1921.

The German built Leopard tank you see in situ is purely a decorative addition to the gardens, it has never been used in warfare.

The Rudd Government honoured a pledge in 2010 by previous governments to decommission the retired 42 tonne battle tanks for the RSL clubs in all states and territories, at a cost of \$11,000 each. This tank was transported from the Bandiana Army Barracks in Wodonga.

A recent memorial plaque has been dedicated in March of 2024 for all women who have served their country in the ADF. This was proudly initiated by the Rutherglen RSL Women's Auxially.



9. The Town Hall (1927)

150 High Street Rutherglen

The Rutherglen Soldiers Memorial Hall was built in 1927. It has seen many functions over its long life, and in earlier days was the town hub for large dances, ceremonies, debutante balls and also served as a picture theatre. More recently and after renovations some years ago, it serves as a multi-purpose community asset managed by the Indigo Shire Council. It has a library, council transaction centre, main hall, RSL meeting room, a small radio broadcasting hub, and an early childhood room. The main entrance area contains the RSL display cabinets and town honour board from WW1.



10. Freemasons Lodge 188

154 High Street Rutherglen

The lovely old Rutherglen Lodge Building (Freemason's Lodge Victoria – number 188).

The Lodge consecration and installation took place on Thursday 31 July 1902 at 3pm. There followed a large banquet across the road at the town hall.

The building architecture is fashioned along the 'Doric' order with the architects being John Young and Son Rutherglen with the construction of the building by W.F. Ratcliffe.

In 1938 the Rutherglen lodge contributed to the equipping of a ward within the newly built Rutherglen Bush nursing Hospital. Today many lodges across Victoria, indeed the Northeast, contribute significantly to charitable causes.



11. The Rutherglen Court House

161 High Street Rutherglen

The Rutherglen Courthouse, built in 1864, is of local architectural and historic significance as a Victorian Free classical style of J.J. Clark, a prominent Public Works Department architect, and as the first public building in the town.

The building is significant as one of the finest small provincial court houses in Victoria and is of considerable historic and social importance to the local community.

The addition of a recessed porch and two rooms to the front elevation in 1905-06, is also of architectural significance in that the building style of these alterations, the Federation Free style, was used for a select group of courthouses, most of which were built prior to the first World War. It was Classified: 18/09/1991.



12. The Rutherglen Common School Museum

44A Murray Street Rutherglen

This iconic old town building was built in 1872 and opened to students in January of 1873. There were 84 students at the onset.

Its history to the town is significant and for the last four decades it has served as a central point for the local historical society. It is now a museum that houses an eclectic and diverse collection of materials. The school building fell into disrepair in 1963 after having served its purpose for secondary education offerings. It was then bought back to life after much hard work and dedication and re-opening in 1985 with a new life as the town museum.

This historic old building has seen many a challenge over the years. In more recent times due to various difficulties, it was closed. This closure also coincided with the covid pandemic between 2020-2022. This allowed the town to re-group, value and determine that it be re-opened, be managed, and cared for by a group of dedicated volunteers, ever respectful of its past and the past contributions of many members of the Rutherglen Historical Society who have given so much over the years.

Today the museum, and the historical society members stand proud, engage across many states and countries, and have membership that is strong, focused and determined to do the absolute best in safe-guarding and sharing our history. Today there is a credible and dynamic research portfolio associated with the museum.



WE HOPE YOU HAVE ENJOYED THIS OVERVIEW OF OUR TOWN'S MANY INTERESTING AND HISTORIC FEATURES.

Rutherglen Historical Society @2023 nacw. Edition 1.

We are the proud recipients of an indigo Shire Council funding Grant for 2023/4 with the 'Get Active Indigo' initiative that has assisted with the publication of this booklet.

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