

# *Things to See and Do in Mansfield*

## **Tourist Information**

Mansfield Visitor Information Centre in old railway station on High St. It is open daily from 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m., tel: (03) 5775 1464. They operate an accommodation booking service and can fill you in on the possibilities for horseriding, camel treks, bushwalking, canoeing, waterskiing, trout fishing, sailboarding, gold panning, fossicking, hot-air ballooning, 4WD tours, ski and equipment hire, mountain-bike riding and white-water rafting. They also have a booklet outlining the town's historic buildings.

## **Monument**

At the corner of High and Highett Sts is a substantial marble monument within the roundabout which was erected in 1880 as a tribute to constables Lonigan, Kennedy and Scanlon who were killed by Ned Kelly at Stringybark Creek to the north-east of town in 1878. They are buried in the cemetery at the end of Highett St.

## **Highton Manor**

The imposing Highton Manor, in Highton Lane, was the town's first two-storey brick home. Built in 1896, it features impressive stained-glass windows. Its original owner, Francis Highett, was a Victorian tennis champion. Also a notable singer he performed duets with Dame Nellie Melba and sang in St Paul's Cathedral in London. Highett was given to long bouts of solitary meditation in the tower where he communicated with his family through a speaking tube which remains.

## **Lake Nillahcootie**

Sailing, fishing, canoeing and boating can be enjoyed on Lake Nillahcootie, 20 km north, adjacent the Midland Highway.

## **Goughs Bay**

Goughs Bay, on Lake Eildon, is 20 km south of Mansfield, off the road to Jamieson. Nearby is the Delatite Arm Reserve. This is a good area for boating, waterskiing, fishing and camping. There are established sites with pit toilets. Fees are charged and bookings are necessary in peak periods, tel: (03) 5775 2788 or 131 963. Houseboats can be hired from High Country Houseboats, tel: (03) 5777 3899.

## **Bonnie Doon**

Bonnie Doon is a small town of around 300 people at the northern end of the lake, 21 km west of Mansfield on the Maroondah Highway

## **Powers Lookout**

The Mansfield-Whitfield Road (61 km), to the north-east of town, offers spectacular scenery of the King River Valley. The best viewing area is Powers Lookout. The name derives from the fact that it was once a vantage point for bushranger Harry Power. A 15-year-old Ned Kelly was charged as being an accomplice of Power in 1870, but the charges were dismissed for want of evidence. Head north-east along the Mansfield-Whitfield Rd for 44 km and turn right onto the gravel road. The lookout is 4 or 5 km away.

## **Mt Samaria State Park**

Mt Samaria State Park (7600 ha) is an attractive and forested semi-remote area which encloses a rugged plateau to the north of Mansfield. It was long used by Aborigines prior to the grazing and logging practices of the European settlers. Wildlife is abundant, as are wildflowers in spring. There are waterfalls, magnificent stands of trees, scenic views and abundant birdlife. Visitors can enjoy scenic walks and drives, picnics, camping, bushwalking and photography. Access can be gained by heading north along the Whitfield Rd for 10 km. When you get to Bridge Creek continue ahead instead of turning right towards Whitfield. After 4 km take the turnoff on the right onto Blue Range Rd. For details ring the Department of Natural Resources on (03) 5761 1611 or Parks Victoria on 131 963.

## **Kinloch Wines**

Kinloch Wines is a family run vineyard and cellar door offering fine wines and gourmet luncheon platters. The cellar door is a converted hay-barn full of warm hospitality and the views are spectacular typical of the high country. Open for tasting and sales during the week and food is served on weekends and public holidays. Call Susan or Malcolm on 5777 3447.

## **Delatite Winery**

Delatite Winery, established in 1968, is a beautifully-situated winery in Stoney Rd (signposted off Mt Buller Rd), about 11 km south-east of Mansfield. It produces a large range of dry red and white table wines and a sparkling wine and it is open daily from 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. There are picnic and barbecue facilities, tel: (03) 5775 2922.

## **Merrijig**

Merrijig, 19 km south-east of Mansfield on the Mt Buller Rd, is a small town which has a resort complex for off-mountain skiers. The area to the north of town was used in the filming of *The Man From Snowy River* and its sequel. A major rodeo is held here on the Labour Day weekend in March.

There are picnic areas beside the Delatite River at Merrijig and further east on the Mt Buller Rd at Sawmill Settlement and Mirrimbah.

## **Howqua Hills Historic Area**

The Howqua Track heads south-east from Merrijig to the Howqua Hills Historic Area. The Howqua River was used as a major trade and war route across the Great Dividing Range for the Aborigines. They used the hard greenstone outcrops along the river for manufacturing spearheads, stone axes and cutting tools.

This land was taken up a part of the Howqua run by the Watson and Hunter Pastoral Company in the 1830s and it is still being used for grazing purposes.

Gold was discovered in the valley in the 1860s and a major reef was located the following decade. Three large companies were established and the township of Howqua was proclaimed in 1888. There was an hotel, a post office, some boarding houses, a blacksmith's and a butcher's. Mining ceased with the closure of the Great Rand in 1905 and the village was deserted.

A number of relics remain from the goldmining days. There is a brick chimney associated with a smelting furnace. Further east is a 100-metre tunnel which was cut through Tunnel Spur to bring water from the Howqua River to a 4-km water race. The race, which conveyed the water to an 18-metre waterwheel located near the chimney, can be seen above the road which links Tunnel Spur and the chimney.

## **Fred Fry's Hut & Pickering's Hut**

Fry's Hut and Pickering Hut were both built by local bushman Fred Fry whose life formed the basis of Nevil Shute's novel *The Far Country* which was later filmed in the area. They cannot be used for overnight camping. However, camping is permitted at Sheepyard Flat where shepherds yarded their sheep at night. Fry's Flat is for summer access only and Davon's Flat is a day visitor and horse camping area with horseyards. The historic area is ideal for camping, bushwalking, fishing and horseriding. Ring (03) 5733 0120 or 131 963 for further information.

## **Howqua**

Howqua is not actually a town but rather a locality on the edge of Lake Eildon, near the junction of the lake and the Howqua River. It is a popular spot for waterskiing, boating and fishing.