



HISTORIC MALMSBURY

A SELF-GUIDED TOUR

**Suitable for walking, cycling
and driving**

Prepared by Malmsbury Historical Society Inc

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<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~malmhist>

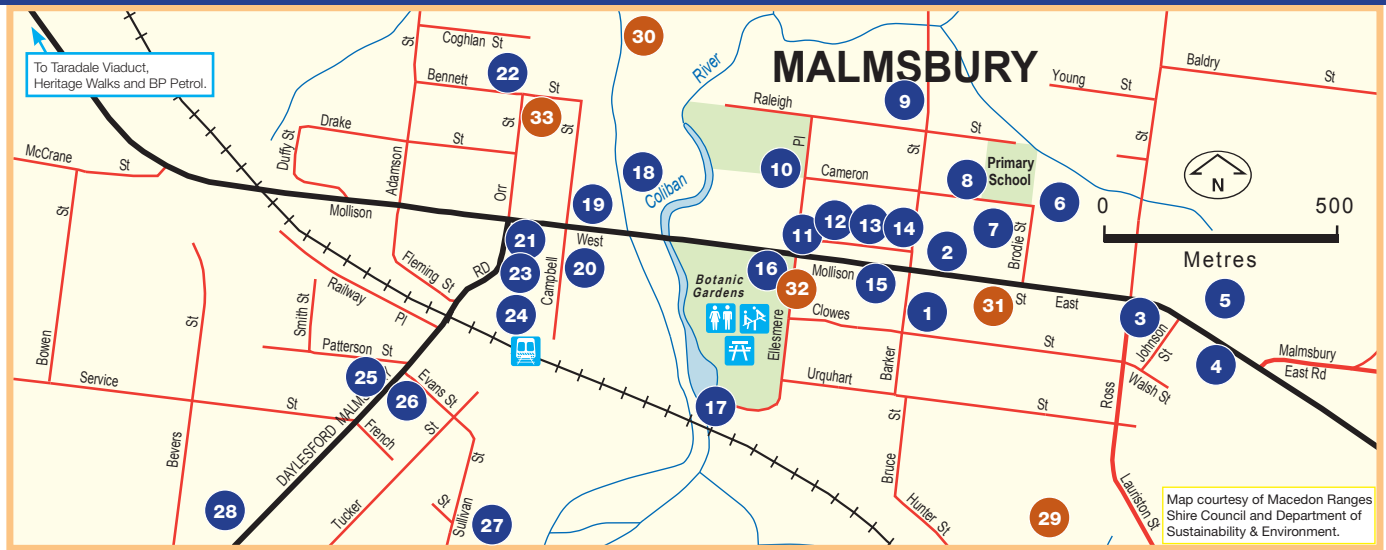
With assistance from

The Bluestone Villages Business & Tourism Association

Please consider local residents when taking this tour, some of the features are private property and entry is not permitted.

Keep noise and speed to a minimum; some side-streets are unsealed.

Petrol, self-guided heritage tours, information and accommodation are available at Taradale. Petrol is also available at Koppers at the Kyneton Mineral Springs (Burton Avenue).



1 Former Roman Catholic Church (*Private*)

This site was previously occupied by the St Mary's Catholic school, a weatherboard school erected in 1856 and replaced by a larger one in 1865. The new school was enlarged in 1873. In 1881, 114 pupils attended the school, with an increase to 130 by 1883. A new church, created from the bluestone formerly used in Tuckers Corn Store (see 20) was erected adjoining the school and officially opened in April 1921 as "The Church of our Lady – Help of Christians". The school closed in the 1940s, the building being removed to Kyneton. By the 1980s the church was no longer in use and was sold, and is now in private hands after being renovated and restored. The "headstones" that can be seen in the garden are a garden feature only.



2 Dr Edward Davy's Residence & Dispensary (*Private*)

This house was used for many years by one of Malmsbury's more famous former residents. Originally from Devon, Dr Davy was later recognised as the inventor of the electric telegraph. After a short period in South Australia, Dr Davy came to Melbourne, then to

Kyneton before settling in Malmsbury in c1860. Not only was he the town's medical practitioner, he was instrumental in the planning and establishment of our Botanic Gardens (see 16), as a registrar for births and deaths, acted as the Council's health officer, served as a local magistrate and JP and served as a Councillor and Mayor for the Borough Council. He died in 1885 aged 78 and is buried in Malmsbury Cemetery. Some time later the building was used by local nurse Mrs McCreery as a maternity hospital. It is now a private residence.

3 Albert Hall/Wesleyan Church (*Private*)

The exact date of this building is not known, but it was built by the local Wesleyans after services commenced in the town on the site of the former sheltershed (15). The site was reserved for a Wesleyan church in 1865 and was still in use in 1885. Used as the state school in 1912–13 when the current school was being modernised, it is now restored as a private residence.

4 Racecourse Hotel ruin (*private*)

Built by 1860, the Racecourse Hotel was originally run by James Thornton and thrived on the trade coming from the nearby Malmsbury Racecourse. It was one of the first hotels reached by travellers coming to Malmsbury from Kyneton. By 1865 it was owned by Robert McGrane and being run by Daniel Ryan; in 1866 John Nolan was running it. A record indicates that it was burnt out in 1869 and possibly rebuilt. In 1893 the Racecourse Hotel was one of six hotels closed by "local option". It has since been allowed to become a ruin.

5 Juvenile Justice Centre/former racecourse

Horse races were being held in Malmsbury by 1862. In 1867 seven trustees were appointed to manage the Racecourse Reserve which

had been “permanently” reserved by the state government from “sale” but within a year the Borough Council became the manager for the site. A race meeting held in 1873 is said to have attracted at least 2,500 people. The site was also used in the 1860s by the Malmsbury division of the Volunteer Corp and later as a recreation reserve (moved to the cricket ground in the 1890s – see 10). After races ceased in the 1930s the land was used for grazing until the Malmsbury Youth Training (now Juvenile Justice) Centre was established in the 1960s. The recently re-named Racecourse Road along its boundary is one of the few reminders of its former life.

6 Old Chinese Market Garden site (Private)

As your turn into Cameron Street, the low-lying land on the right was used for at least 30 years by local Chinese as a market garden. Being a creek gully that was fed by runoff from the racecourse and surrounding areas, it was an ideal site. After the Chinese left it was used by other local residents as a market garden well into the 1950s.

7 St John’s Church of England

The Church of England acquired a site for school purposes in 1855 and church purposes in 1859. A bluestone “common” school was opened in 1857 and used as both a school and a church. The church site was seen as being unsuitable and Mr William Swanwick gave the site of the current church to the committee. The foundation stone of the new church, designed to hold 400 worshippers, was laid in 1861. The building was officially opened in 1866 and completed in 1873. The centenary of the church was celebrated in 1966, and funds raised were used for some badly-needed repairs. The church is the only one in town still in use for its original purpose.

8 Malmsbury primary school

The 1870 Education Act saw the former “Common” school become a State school but as the population grew a new building was needed. The foundation stone of this bluestone school was laid in 1873 and opened in 1874 on land, adjoining the original common school site, originally granted to the presbyterians. Mr W Young was the head teacher at the time and there were two rooms, a third being added later. Improvements were made in 1912–13 and again in 2009–10.

9 Old Police Station (Private)

The bluestone residence on the top of the hill on the left as you approached the bridge is a former police station. A police station was established in Malmsbury in 1852 and a new building completed in 1853. In 1858 the original building was badly in need of repair and tenders were called for the construction of a new stone building (the one at this stop) in 1860, along with a request for a second lockup. Criticism was made of its location, being away from the town and not in the main street, but the site does give a good view of the township. Further repairs were made in 1885. The advent of motor cars saw the entire police paddock reserve of 21

acres, created in 1867, reduced down to less than 1 acre in 1937 and the portion with the buildings on it sold off. The old station is now a private residence.

10 Malmsbury Cricket Ground

Affectionately known locally as the MCG, the cricket ground was reserved in 1878 when the racecourse was still being used as a recreation reserve. More land was added to it in 1950, and again in 1982 when the extension of Cameron Street was no longer needed. Malmsbury had its own football and cricket teams, the latter of which is still operating. A photo display in the Malmsbury Hotel (15) records some the history of the town’s sporting prowess. An arboretum adjoining the MCG makes an attractive use of land that can sometimes be flooded.

11 Former Presbyterian Church (Private)

Presbyterian services began in the former Malmsbury Shelter Shed in 1862. In 1865 the Presbyterian Church was originally granted the site currently occupied by the primary school. This Mollison Street site was originally set aside by the government as a reserve for public purposes in 1867 but was quickly changed to a Presbyterian Church site, with the weatherboard church being erected upon it in 1872. Upon the merger with the local Methodist church in 1972, ahead of the formation of the Uniting Church in 1977, it became known as the United Parish Church in 1972. The church closed its doors in the 1990s.

12 Former Bank of New South Wales (Private)

A bank operated from this site from about 1864 but the original bank building was probably smaller. At the time the owner of the site (RB Tucker) died the property was described as having upon it “a building partly of brick and partly of stone. Brick partitions, shingle roof, containing ten rooms with stable, smelting house and outhouses, rented to the bank of NSW at £80 per annum. One portion of the building erected 25 years ago, and the other about 12 years”. If this is accurate, part of the building dates to about 1859 and the rest to 1872, however the two-storey building at the front probably dates to post 1884 as it does not appear in the photo of the town taken c1879–1882. Since its closure it has been used as a cafe and antiques centre but is now a private residence.



13 Former Police Station (*Private*)

After the original police station was closed down in 1934, it re-opened on the east side of town at the Birthday Villa in 1941, the premises being leased by the government. In 1956 new government-owned premises were built in Mollison Street opposite the Malmsbury Hotel. This site, now known as "THE NICK" was sold after the new police station was built in 1999.

14 Current Police Station/Methodist Church site

The site of the police station is where the former brick Methodist church was built. The Methodist and Wesleyan congregations later merged, the Albert Hall subsequently being used by the Salvation Army. Subsidence due to soil conditions saw the demolition of the Methodist Church in 1963. The new police station, built in 1999, also experienced structural problems.

15 Malmsbury shops (east to west)

A. Merchants of Malmsbury

Built in the 1870s, and used by Mr Laing as a grocery store, it was also used for quite some time as the local post office. Used temporarily as a ceramic studio, Merchants of Malmsbury cafe was opened in 2001 by photographer Len Johnston.

B. Made in Malmsbury

Although a more recent addition to the streetscape, this building has housed a butcher, a pizza & video store, and an antiques store. It is now a gold and silversmiths with an adjoining B&B.

C. Malmsbury Mechanics Institute

This site is part of the original Caroline Chisholm Shelter Shed built in 1855 to accommodate families travelling to and from the goldfields. Later used as the first Borough Council chambers and Mechanics Institute, it was subdivided and sold by the government, the Institute acquiring the portion of the reserve with the old shed on it. The front of the current building was erected in 1876 and the Federal Hall added in 1895. Apart from the Institute activities, the building has been used by various lodges, a bank, for dances and billiards. With little funding to keep it going, it fell into decline until the 1970s when it was once again opened up for public use. The formation of the Malmsbury Historical Society, as a committee of the Malmsbury Advance Association, saw the rebirth of its role in "disseminating information" to the community. The Mechanics Institute is often overlooked by visitors. It is now used for bingo, yoga, art classes and local meetings and events, as well as Historical Society activities.

D. The Providore

Built in 1882 as two separate shops, "The Providore" has changed little in that time. Initially used by a stationer and a saddler, the shops have also housed a bootmaker, bakery, and a grocery store. In more recent times modifications have converted it into a single shop which has housed a gallery, antiques store and a gourmet grocery.

E. Tin Shed Arts

The site originally housed Flemings drapery store and what is believed to be the Court House Hotel. With time these shops were replaced with a service station, the shell of which remains. Converted some years ago into an art gallery, "Tin Shed Arts" is another example of the diversity in which our old buildings have been used.

F. Malmsbury Bakery

Like many surviving commercial buildings in Malmsbury, the bakery is an amalgamation of several small shops. Over time they housed a stationer, grocer, draper and a general store. The bakery dates back to the late 1980s and has been running for at least 20 years, building an enviable reputation amongst travellers. The indoors cafe area was formerly used as a post office and general store before the present post office opened. The bluestone building at the back of the courtyard was built as stables.

G. Malmsbury Hotel

The use of this site as a hotel would probably be the longest continuous running single business in Malmsbury operating from a single site. A map of Malmsbury dated to about 1859 shows the hotel marked on its present site. The former two-storey wooden hotel was demolished and replaced by the current brick one in the 1930s, with the second story, motel, bottle shop and function centre being added in the 1980s, and TAB in the 1990s.



H. Malmsbury General Store and Post Office

Shoemakers, butchers, fruiterers, drapers and general storekeepers have all used this site before the shrinking of the town's business centre and closure of shops enabled the building to take on the vital role of being the newsagent and post office. Also an amalgamation of originally separate business premises, it also functions as a general store with convenience food.

16 Town Hall and Botanic Gardens

The Gardens reserve was created by the State Government in 1863 after the Borough of Malmsbury made a request for a 23 acre site to be granted for this purpose. Planting began shortly afterwards although six acres on the west side of the river was removed in 1866 to make allowances for the Coliban Water Scheme. Part of the former flood plain, swamp and lagoon system of the Coliban

River is included in the reserve, so while it is prone to flooding in very wet years, the natural lakes and ponds form an integral part of the landscape and makes good use of land that would otherwise have been unsuitable for development. The gardens also offer a great vantage point for scenic views of the viaduct as well as access to the arboretum across the road via a path under the road bridge. At the north-east entry is the WWI memorial gates. The fountain and lake edging were created from bluestone removed from the former Tuckers Corn Store building near the railway station. Guided tour maps for the gardens can be found at the pedestrian gate (adjoining the toilets and playground) at the rear of the Town Hall (built 1867 and opened in 1868 and it has been used as Council Chambers and Local Court as well as for local entertainment and fundraising events)

You can view the viaduct during the gardens walk or see it as part of this tour (17)

17 Viaduct

Cross the river and park near the vineyard. Walk on the gravel driveway that follows the water race away from Mollison Street. This offers a different vantage point of the viaduct.

Built from local bluestone in 1859–60, this majestic bridge is one of the most famous landmarks of the town. It is 149m long, has five arches, each of which has a span of 18m and rise 22m above the river. Nearly 9,000 m³ of solid stone was used in its construction. It cost £72,000 to build and when completed, it was the largest masonry bridge built in Australia (longer than the Perth Bridge in Tasmania which is 88m long).

18 Malmsbury common

This public land was the site of the Malmsbury stone cutting works that dressed much of the early bluestone quarried and shipped from Malmsbury (see the ruins not far from the river). There are signs of former alluvial mining on the common, and a water channel was created to use water from the race to operate the stone works. Later, the land was reserved as a Victorian Volunteer Rifles practice and drill ground (having moved from the racecourse) and was acquired by the Commonwealth Government for defence purposes after federation. A golf club was created in 1922 (we assume the rifle range was not active at the time!). The site is currently being revegetated by the combined efforts of the Catchment Management Authority, Malmsbury Landcare and Greencorp volunteers.

19 Malmsbury Mill (private)

One of several early mills in Malmsbury, Blyth Brothers built their original steam-powered mill in 1861 but an accident in 1862 saw one of the boilers blowing up and killing two men as a result. While the public raised funds for the families of the deceased men, the mill was rebuilt and remained in operation until the 1890s when it was then used as a chaff cutting mill. It eventually fell into disuse and became a ruin until Roger Aldridge set about restoring it in the 1970s. Used for a restaurant, gallery, wine bar and B&B, it once

again became a well-known feature of the town. It is currently used as a restaurant, reception and function centre.

20 Birthday Villa House and Vineyard (private)

This original house was built c1884 by JH Boundy from income from the very successful Queen's Birthday mine in Drummond. He died in 1893 as a result of burns received in an accident with a kerosene lamp which badly injured both himself and his wife. The house was later used as a police station and residence in 1941 (see 13) before being returned to a private residence in the 1950s. At its rear, adjoining the railway line, stood Tuckers Corn Store, a large bluestone building erected in 1878 for the storage of grain. After falling into disuse, it was purchased by the Roman Catholic Church in the early 1900s and used as a meeting hall for the Catholic Young Men's Society. Roller skating events were held there in the 1920s. Eventually the stone was recycled to create the Roman Catholic church (see 1) and the fountain in the Gardens (16). Today the whole property is a private residence and used to run the Birthday Villa Vineyard.

The front allotments were not part of the original Boundy estate, as they used to have shops and the long-gone Bridge Hotel located on them. This hotel, and Tucker's store, can be seen in the photo on the sign out the front of the Mechanics Institute.

21 The Mansions (Private)

The Junction Hotel was one of the early wooden hotels in Malmsbury. It may have begun as a butchers shop built by John Coghlan and his son-in-law John Maher, but the building burnt down in 1872. John Coghlan replaced it with a stone hotel and adjoining shops and eventually sold the business to his son Martin. It went through a series of owners and fought several attempts to close it by the License Reduction Board before finally being forced to close in 1914. It later became used for accommodation only under the name "Residential Mansions" and was used in the 1980s as the headquarters for the religious group headed by the former Anglican minister Reverend Ron Woods. Today the building is in poor repair and closed to public use and is known simply as "The Mansions".



22 Memorial Cairn to Mollison (corner Orr & Bennett Streets)

This cairn makes the approximate location of Alexander Mollison's original homestead for his "Coliban" squatters run of some 25,000 acres, the east boundary of which was the Coliban River. Mollison settled here in 1837 but falling livestock prices saw him sell the run to James Orr in 1848. Orr was forced to battle with a State Government that had a view to expanding the settled areas of the colony and Coliban was eventually reduced to a pre-emptive right of only 640 acres to allow the surveying and settling of the new township of Malmesbury. "Coliban" eventually became known as "Pemberley", a portion of which is still running today on the western shores of the reservoir.

23 Commercial hotel (*private*)

This old two-story hotel was formerly McGrane's Commercial Hotel. Established in 1866 (McGrane previously owned the Racecourse Hotel) the premises included a hotel and a store and attracted business from the railway station. Like the Junction Hotel (21) it fought for its survival at the 1892 Licensing Reduction Board but was eventually forced to close in 1936, leaving only the Malmesbury Hotel surviving. It too is in poor repair. The Railway Hotel once stood between the Commercial Hotel and the station.



24 Malmesbury Railway Station

After an battle in the early 1860s over where to place the station, these buildings were finally erected in 1862 after the railway line was completed. The goods shed was added a short time later and extended in 1863. The decline of railway freight saw the eventual removal of the freight sidings and the station buildings were disused by 1990. The development of the fast train saw the removal of the second track and it is only the southern, unprotected platform, that is still used by the public. The station residence is supposedly haunted by a ghost of a girl killed crossing the line but the events surrounding the death of any child at the station have yet to be confirmed, although some former residents and travellers have met their ultimate fate at the station. The buildings are currently under a private lease from the government and are disused.

From here you can use the railway pedestrian crossing if on foot or by bike to continue to the next point. Head to the Daylesford Road/ Evans Street intersection.

25 Bluestone Barn

The "barn" was owned by Ely Lumb as a warehouse and hay and corn store. Although Lumb who bought the land in 1866 was advertising as a carrier operating between Malmesbury and Daylesford in 1867, the store was not built until 1870. Situated on a main road and near the station, the building was clearly intended to take advantage of the traffic coming to and from the station and the reservoir construction work.

26 Woodbine Arts Gallery

The art gallery was originally built in the mid 1860s as a general store which was run by Bevers and Fiege, but Bevers took over the business after the partnership ceased calling it the "Royal Mail Stores". After Hermann Bevers died it became Fagan's Store, then Boddy Bros Store in 1918, and then later a butcher shop run by Percy Clark in 1935. At that stage the weighbridge (located under where the car park is) was still in place.

27 Malmesbury Reservoir (Sullivan Street)

Despite plans from the early 1860s, construction work on the Coliban Scheme did not actually commence until 1866. The Malmesbury Reservoir was completed in 1871 but problems with design, funding, and periods of heavy rainfall delayed the work until the scheme was finally completed in 1877. The dam wall at Malmesbury was enlarged in 1888 and the addition of steel flood gates in 1939 increased storage further. Some of the original hand-worked bluestone has been removed and replaced with concrete. By the end of the drought in the early 2000's the reservoir held less than 10% of its capacity. This was increased very rapidly to 75% (total capacity without the flood gates lowered) and overflowed by late 2010 thanks to the rainfall received in that year; a measure of how efficient the Coliban system can be in years of good rainfall. The age of the reservoir has forced the flood gates to remain open which has reduced the capacity of the reservoir to pre-1939 levels.

28 Belltopper Hill

If you go a bit further down the Daylesford Road, you will see on your right (west side) Belltopper Hill. Although there were many local mines which were productive, the Belltopper Hill area (including North Drummond and the Back Creek Valley) was particularly noted for its production of gold from the 1850s through to the 1890s. Many of these were quartz and "deep lead" mines, where gold-bearing reefs and former river systems, buried by lava flows from nearby volcanic eruptions, were sought out. A fire in January 2009 (a couple of weeks before Black Saturday) began west of the hill, burnt most of the south face of the hill and quickly reached the south-western corner of Malmesbury, where it was finally controlled. A drive out to, and along, Zig Zag Road in Drummond (approx three kilometres) gives a great vantage point of this area, plus you can try the wines at Zig Zag and Basalt Ridge wineries.



Photograph by Leonard Johnston

Other points of interest:

29 Malmsbury Cemetery

Accessed by taking Ross Street (from Mollison Street) then Lasslett Street and going through the gate with the cattle grid to the right of the Youngs Road intersection. The cemetery was formally opened in 1860 with the first burial being that of the wife of the local Anglican minister. Still in use, it is a very picturesque location, with views of the viaduct and reservoir. You can return to Malmsbury the way you came, or continue down Youngs Road to reach the Kyneton-Lauriston Road.

30 The Coliban River and Water Race

If you return to number 18 and climb the gate on the right (east) side of the water race, you can follow the path along the race for quite a few kilometres. Access is strictly by foot and some gates need to be climbed over (some can be opened, but please ensure all gates are shut after you). After going through three gates the race takes a distinct left-hand bend towards the Calder Highway, but if you continue ahead a bit further you reach Ellis Falls, which, if the river is running well, is worth the walk. You can return by the path you came in by, or for a more organised walk, a car parked at Forrest Road on the old Calder Highway can eventually be reached if you wish to follow the race and Forrest Road to this point.

31 Hullabaloo Studio

Exhibitions and workshops.

32 The Stables: Mediterranean Café Restaurant & Pizzeria

Originally opened at Motobean Café in 2014, this recent addition to the town offers a pleasant view of the Malmsbury Gardens while you eat.