

HERITAGE WALK MAP



1 W.H. EDWARDS MUSEUM

Originally the fire station, it is today headquarters of the Wangaratta Historical Society.



2 MEMORIAL TOWN HALL

Built on the site of the municipal offices (1867-1962), it was opened in 1963 and demolished in 2008 to make way for the Performing Arts Centre.



3 EXHIBITIONS GALLERY

Originally the Presbyterian Church, it was purchased by the city council in the mid 1980s.



4 MONUMENT GARDENS

The basalt and granite memorials commemorate the district soldiers killed in the wars. They were designed by Arthur Rundle and James McLeod.

5 THE HOLY TRINITY CATHEDRAL

The church precinct embraces the Cathedral, Cathedral Close, Purbrick Hall, Bishop's Lodge and the Deanery that is the oldest building in Wangaratta.



6 TAFE COLLEGE

Opened in 1928 as the Wangaratta Technical School, it is today the Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE with more than 2,000 students.

7 WATER TOWERS

The borough's third water tower, it was built in 1929 and was later used for abseiling. Across the footbridge is the first water tower built in 1874. Today it is the headquarters of the Railway Club.



8 THE RAILWAY STATION

It was opened in 1873 before the section of the line to Wodonga was built.

9 SIR EDWARD DUNLOP'S BIRTHPLACE (LISTER HOUSE)

The present motel building is on the site of a private hospital where Sir Edward Dunlop was born in 1907.



10 BISHOP'S LODGE

It was erected in 1904 as Bishop's Palace and is the residence of the Anglican Bishop of the Diocese.

11 ST CATHERINE'S HOSTEL

The hostel was opened in 1967 in Ford Street. It was then relocated to Ryley Street and reopened in 2001.

12 THE CONVENT PRECINCT

It includes St Brigid's, a Catholic regional education office, the chapel and the grotto.

13 ST PATRICK'S CHURCH PRECINCT

It includes the church, built in two sections, the presbytery, Tara Court and St Patrick's Hall. William Wardell, who designed the first section of the church, was also the designer of St Patrick's Cathedral in Melbourne and St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney.



14 MERRIWA PARK

A sunken natural park, originally a meeting place of the Pangerang Aboriginal Tribe. Merriwa means the rich flat ground at the bend of a river.

15 THE FIRST SCHOOL

The site is on the south west corner of Chisholm Street. The school was opened by William Bindall in 1848 with 17 pupils.

16 THE WANGARATTA BREWERY

The site is at the east end of Ely Street, behind number 2 Chisholm Street. Built in 1868, it was one of four breweries in the town.



17 JOHN McEWEN'S CHILDHOOD HOME

The present residence, the Parsonage, is built on the site of John McEwen's childhood home. For a short time he was Prime Minister of Australia.

18 PINSENT HOTEL

Originally the Royal Hospital and later the Royal Hotel, it was conducted by Mrs Annie Pinsent between 1917 and 1934.



19 WANGARATTA'S FIRST STATE SECONDARY SCHOOL

Originally the Wangaratta Agricultural High School, it became in 1962 the first Victorian regional centre for continuing education.

20 STATE SCHOOL 643

In 1850 the national school occupied this site with Henry Howard as head teacher and with an enrolment of 30 pupils.



21 PIONEER CEMETERY

The township's first cemetery is situated near the junction of the Ovens and King Rivers.



Heritage Walk

WANGARATTA



WELCOME

Welcome to the historic sites of Wangaratta. We invite you to take this guided walk and experience a blend of various architectural styles encompassing Neo Romanesque, Norman and Gothic designs. Let these designs take you back to days gone by. Take time to read the storyboards as you wander along the streets and through our beautiful churches, parks and gardens.



Known as Ovens Crossing for its first few years, Wangaratta (an Aboriginal word meaning either resting place of cormorants or meeting of the waters) was named by surveyor Thomas Wedge in 1848. Wedge also named the first eleven streets: Chisholm, Murphy, Ovens, Baker, Gray, Templeton, Faithfull, Reid, Rowan, Ford and Docker, after local pioneers.

Following Major Mitchell's favourable report of the area, overlanders were quickly on the move and settlement began in Ovens Crossing in 1838. Thomas Rattray, our first settler, built a two-room slab and bark hut and primitive store on the banks of the Ovens River.

In the following year William Clark acquired Rattray's store and built the Hope Inn. A few years later, when the highway was re-routed from Ovens to Murphy Street, he built the three storey Commercial Hotel on the south eastern corner of Murphy and Reid Street.

By 1848 the township had been officially named and the population was approximately 200.

During the next two years the first land sales were held, the first police were stationed here and the first police magistrate, George Harper, was appointed.

During the 1850s the gold rush brought thousands to the Ovens and Beechworth fields and business boomed in Wangaratta. The first Ovens Bridge was built, church services were held and the Agricultural Society was established.

The first priorities of the seven member borough council, elected in 1863 with George Lucas as mayor, were to build roads, bridges, footpaths, create parks, plant trees and install street lighting.

In the 1870s the public hospital was built, the Melbourne to Sydney rail line passed through Wangaratta, water mains were laid in several streets,

the market yards were established and the first fire brigade was formed.

At the turn of the century the population was two and a half thousand and there was a slow but steady growth till the end of WWII. The advent of Bruck Mills in 1947 accelerated the growth and at one time the mill had more than 1,000 employees.

When Wangaratta attained city status in 1959, it had a population of 12,000.

Although it received little government assistance, Wangaratta was regarded as a decentralisation exemplar and won the Victorian Premier Town competition in 1964 and 1976.

By the middle 1970s the population had reached 17,000 and when the Ovens Street municipal offices were opened in 1980 it was predicted that it would be about 40,000 by the end of the century.

Such was not the case, and although the fusing of parts of six municipalities created the Rural City of Wangaratta in 1995 the population has remained fairly static for the past decade.

Today it numbers 28,000.

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Wangaratta Historical Society

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22 MAJOR MITCHELL BRIDGE

Opened in 1964, it is the fourth bridge to span the Ovens River. The first bridge was built in 1854.

23 COLONIAL MUTUAL LIFE BUILDING

Originally, the courthouse and police barracks occupied this site where the first borough council meeting was held in July 1863.



24 COURT HOUSE & PUBLIC OFFICE

They were built in 1938 at a cost of £14,000.



25 ROYAL VICTORIA HOTEL

It was built in 1854 at a cost of £10,000. It had its own theatre. The hotel was demolished in 2006 and replaced by Centrelink.



26 HOWDEN'S SHOP

Built in 1851, this was the oldest building in Wangaratta until it was demolished in 2004.

27 WANGARATTA RSL

Originally the Hope Inn, it was destroyed by fire in 1864. Rebuilt by William Painter who changed its name to the Sydney Hotel, to reflect its location on Sydney Road, now known as Ovens Street. In 2019 it became the Wangaratta RSL.



28 MEMORIAL GARDENS

Usually known as the King George V Gardens, they were gazetted in 1936.

29 UNITING CHURCH

Adjacent to the gardens, it was built in 1885 as the Wesleyan Church and later became the Methodist Church. It took its present name when the Methodist and Presbyterian churches amalgamated.



30 THE CO-STORE

Originally, one of Australia's oldest retail co-operatives, the North Eastern Co-Store graced this site from 1906 until remodelled in the early 1990s.



31 OLD LIBRARY

A building was first erected on this site in 1858. It was demolished and the free Library was opened in 1909, it also contained a billiard room and a meeting room. It is now the Wangaratta Visitors Information Centre and Family History Society.



32 OLD POST OFFICE

The Post Office was erected in stages in the 1870s and 1880s. The telephone exchange was opened in 1904 with 33 subscribers.

