KOROIT – THE IRISH HEARTLAND OF AUSTRALIA

Where a hearty welcome and a genuine Irish community awaits you. Unique and character filled Koroit is one of Australia`s most complete examples of an early Irish settlement.

Nestled on the northern rim of Tower Hill State Reserve, Koroit is named after the Koroitch Gundidj people who occupied the area for thousands of years. Rich volcanic soils lured men of the land. In the 1840s and 50s Irish immigrant farmers settled here, many as small grain and potato farmers who 'took their produce down the slope to Warrnambool'.

The township grew, naturally taking on the lively character and culture of the settlers' Irish homeland. Today's Koroit honours its strong Irish catholic heritage. It flavours every aspect of life, from architecture and hospitality to a proudly close-knit community. While dairying has taken over many of the original potato fields, farming is still the mainstay.

Stroll or cycle along the main street Commercial Road and enjoy local produce, tasty eateries, quirky shops and a drink or two at local watering holes. As you wander the streets, you'll find Irish charm at every turn.

KOROIT IRISH FESTIVAL

The Festival celebrates all that's Irish in this little patch of green in south west Victoria. It runs over three days at the end of April and hosts a stack of live Irish music, dancing, the Australian Danny Boy Championship, kids activities and street entertainment.

HISTORIC RAILWAY PRECINCT 10

A window to a bygone era. The Koroit railway station began operations in 1889. Although train services ceased in 1977, the building remains a brilliant backdrop to a family friendly precinct that's definitely worth making time to explore. Let the little ones run free at the railway themed adventure playground. For the bigger kids? Head to the outdoor exercise circuit, skate park, basketball half court and BBQ area.

TOWER HILL WILDLIFE RESERVE 32

Tower Hill Reserve was declared Victoria's first National Park in 1892. The Reserve sits in a large volcanic crater, and is one of Victoria's most fascinating and significant geological formations. Volcanic cone-shaped hills rise from the lakes.

Tower Hill is home to some of Australia's most loved wildlife. Emus, kangaroos, koalas, swans, ducks and blue wrens all live inside this magnificent dormant volcano. Walk across wetlands, craters and bushland and learn how the park was exploited by early settlers before being restored by volunteers, or let the Worn Gundidj guide you on a tour where you will learn about the Aboriginal history and cultural heritage.

KOROIT BOTANIC GARDENS 18

Take a break in the refreshing, green Koroit Botanic Gardens. Meander pathways midst trees and shrubberies, and wonder at the 1857 vision of district surveyor Thomas Watson who allotted 20 acres for public gardens. With its Guilfoyle-inspired plan, the gardens now offer plenty for young and old, including a playground and public toilets. More than 100 rare and unusual trees from around the world will keep you all guessing.
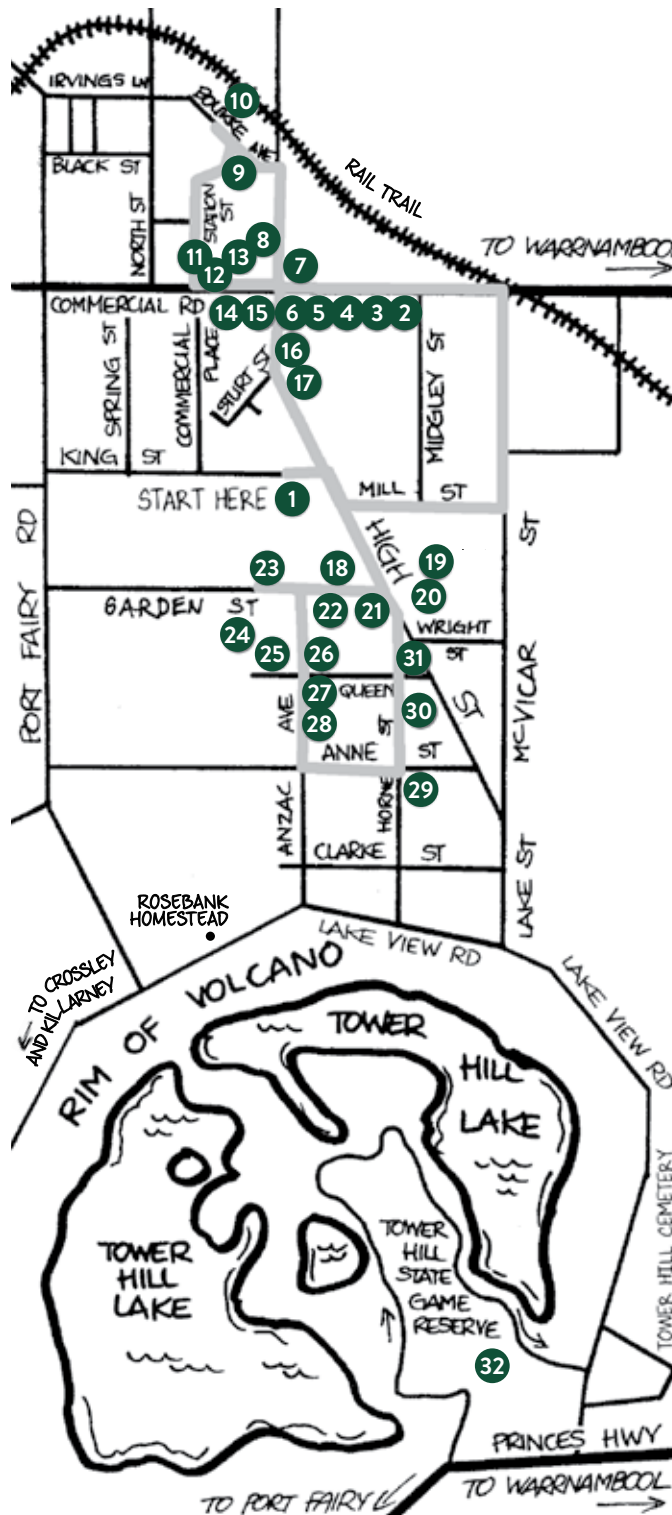

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1. **TOWER HILL COMMON SCHOOL, 1857.** Currently the Koroit & District Historical Society headquarters.

2. **ORIGINALLY KOROIT BUTTER FACTORY, 1889.**

3. **STATE SCHOOL NO.618, 1878.** The adjacent residence was built in 1890.

4. **FORMER COURT HOUSE, 1872.** Operated until 1976.

5. **POLICE RESIDENCE, 1885.** New Police Station building opened 2007.

6. **POST OFFICE, 1858.** Current building completed in 1872. Former home of author Henry Handel Richardson c. 1879.

7. **OLD COURTHOUSE INN, 1901.**

8. **ABERCORN, 1875.** Adjacent to one of the first general stores in town.

9. **CORNER OF STATION STREET AND BOURKE AVENUE.** Site of former Station Master's residence.

10. **RAILWAY STATION, 1889.** Original building was timber, existing brick station building completed in 1907. The station operated until 1977.

11. **CORNER STORE, 1883.**

12. **LARGE DOUBLE FRONT SHOP, 1906.** Operated as Barr's General Store for many years.

13. **FORMER NATIONAL AUSTRALIA BANK, 1868.** Second story and façade added in late 1880s.

14. **FORMER COLONIAL BANK OF AUSTRALASIA, 1876.**

15. **KOROIT HOTEL, 1861.** Art Nouveau façade added in the early 1900s.

16. **SITE OF FORMER FIRE STATION, 1900.**

17. **FORMER KOROIT BOROUGH CHAMBERS, 1878.** South wing built in 1970. Currently the local Library.

18. **BOTANIC GARDENS, 1860s.** Designed by William Guilfoyle. Contains several trees classified by the National Trust.

19. **OLD HILLCREST, 1910.** Victorian residence built by Richard Skilbeck, one of Koroit's earliest pioneers.

20. **THE PINES COTTAGE, 1860.**

21. **FORMER METHODIST CHURCH, 1859.** Existing building opened in 1868. Currently the Scout Hall.

22. **SCOTS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 1861.** Adjacent Manse built in 1863/64.

23. **HISTORIC HORSE TROUGH, 20TH CENTURY.** One of many placed in country areas by Annis and George Bills.

24. **EARLY SETTLER'S COTTAGE, 1889/90.**

25. **FORMER CONVENT OF GOOD SAMARITAN SISTERS, 1907.**

26. **ST PATRICK'S SCHOOL ESTABLISHED 1890.** The oldest existing building dates from 1921.

27. **CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE INFANT JESUS, 1870.** Later extensions were added in 1915/16.

28. **FORMER CATHOLIC CHURCH PRESBYTERY, LATE 1880s.** Now privately owned.

29. **LATE VICTORIAN HOME, 1918.** Note the shamrock on the stonework above front left window.

30. **ST PAUL'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, 1870.**

31. **EDWARDIAN HOME, 1900.**

32. **TOWER HILL WILDLIFE RESERVE.**

THE KOROIT AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY, found at the Tower Hill Common School [no.1]. Preserves, records and shares the fascinating history of Koroit and district. The museum is open to the public once a month, for opening hours please visit www.facebook.com/koroithistoricalsociety