

Whroo Historic Reserve



Visitor Guide

In 1853 thousands of people arrived to seek their fortunes at Whroo and the surrounding area. In early 1857, the population at Whroo peaked at 2100, but had dwindled to 500 by the end of the year. Gold worth millions of pounds was taken out with the largest find at Balaclava Hill.



The Aboriginal name for the waterhole - "Wooroo" meaning mouth, is the origin of the name Whroo

Go for a walk

An extensive network of tracks throughout the forest (see map overleaf) takes you to Whroo's main points of interest. Wildflowers, including wattles, provide spectacular displays during spring.

The Balaclava open cut mine is a spectacular example of early quartz reef mining. Puddling machines and the remnants of areas of quartz reef and shallow alluvial lead mining areas can be found throughout the historic township site.

A cemetery lies on a lonely hillside and contains some 400 graves, reflecting the harshness of life on the goldfields.

Not far from the cemetery, on Spring Hill, is the **Ngurai-Illam-Wurrung Rock Well**, reputedly used by Aborigines and later enlarged by gold miners so that they could immerse billies. It is thought the Aborigines protected the waterhole with a rock to prevent pollution by animals and debris, and to reduce evaporation.

Enjoy a picnic

The picnic area at Whroo has toilets, fireplaces and tables. Camping is available in Greens campground where basic toilets are provided.

Facilities

A small kiosk, Whroo Miners Retreat, provides light refreshments and souvenirs plus a range of publications relating to the area. The kiosk is open most weekends and public holidays or by appointment (Phone: 03 5856 1561).

A history of gold

Whroo Historic Reserve lies within the 33,000ha Rushworth State Forest. The 500ha reserve encompasses the site of the Whroo township and part of the associated goldfields.

Whroo was central to the lands of the Ngurai-illam-wurrung Aboriginal people. In 1836 Major Mitchell passed diagonally through Victoria, crossing the Goulburn River some 20km south of Whroo. Settlers followed and, by 1845, the traditional lifestyle and food resources of the indigenous people had been destroyed.

By 1850 the area was extensively settled by pastoralists and, with the discovery of gold in 1853, the township of Whroo was established.

When the more easily won surface gold petered out and reef mining activity intensified, the area assumed the character it was to maintain for many years. Tents were replaced by huts of logs, slab, dry clay bricks and stone. Stores and hotels appeared, along with butcher shops, dairies, a bakery, banks and one of the first goldfields' Mechanics Institute and Library.

All of the town's 139 buildings have now been moved or destroyed, yet an atmosphere remains. Sugar-gums, peppercorns and pine trees mark where the town once stood.

How to get there

Whroo Historic Reserve is located about 190km north of Melbourne. Access is along the Goulburn Valley Highway to Murchison, turn off to Rushworth then travel 7km south through the forest to Whroo. Alternative routes are via Nagambie and Graytown.

December 2010

Printed on Australian-made 100% recycled paper



Touring the area

Whroo Miners Retreat
Information Centre
Whroo Road
Rushworth Vic 3612
Tel: (03) 5856 1561

Nagambie
Visitor Information Centre
145 High Street
Nagambie Vic 3605
Tel: (03) 5794 2647

Parks Victoria
Bendigo Office
57 View Street
Bendigo Vic 3550
Call 13 1963

Caring for the environment

Help us look after your parks by remembering these guidelines:

Please take rubbish home with you for recycling or disposal

All plants, animals, historical, archaeological sites and geographic features are protected by law

Dogs are to be restrained

Light fires only in fire places provided.
No fires, including barbecues, may be lit on a day of

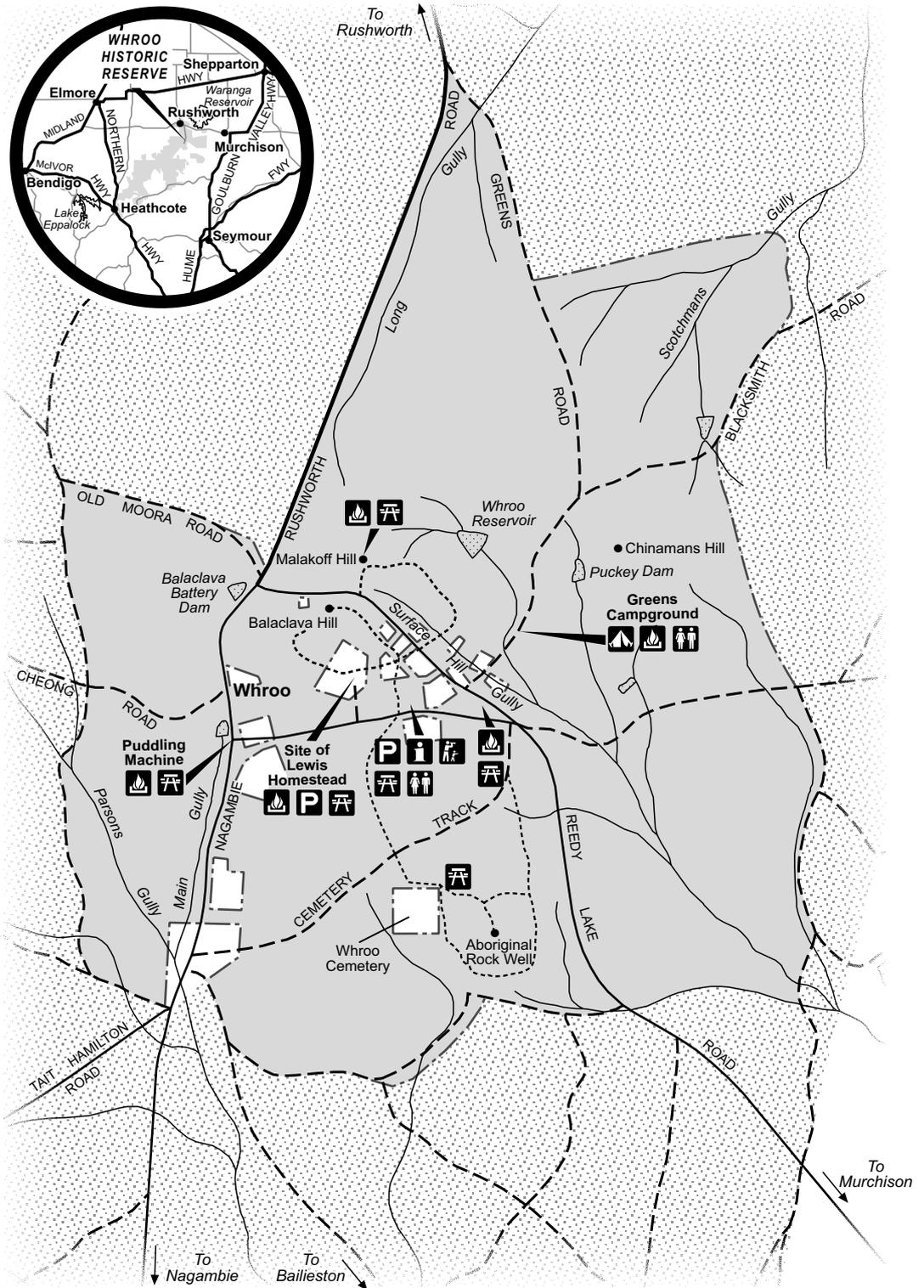
Total Fire Ban.

Whroo Historic Reserve is in the **North Central Total Fire Ban District.**

It is preferable that you provide your own firewood. Gas Barbecues are recommended.

Vehicles, including motor bikes, may only be used on formed open roads. Drivers must be licensed and vehicles registered and roadworthy

Permits are required for fossicking



Be fire ready and stay safe

Many parks and forests are located in high fire risk areas. **On days of forecast Code Red Fire Danger this park will be closed for public safety.**

If you are already in the park you should leave the night before or early in the morning for your own safety. Closure signs will be erected and rangers will patrol where possible, however you may not receive a personal warning that the park is closed so check the latest conditions by calling 13 1963 or visit www.parkweb.vic.gov.au

For up to date information on fires in Victoria or general fire safety advice call the **Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667.**

Whroo Historic Reserve

- Sealed road
- Unsealed road
- Vehicular track
- Walking track

- Historic Reserve
- Rushworth State Forest

Recreational Facilities

- Camping
- Carpark
- Fireplace
- Lookout

- Park information
- Picnic table
- Toilets

