

Howqua Hills Historic Area

Visitor Guide



Howqua Hills is a site of natural beauty, from river flats to surrounding hills with Manna Gums and Narrow-leaved Peppermints. Rediscover the days of gold mining and settlement as you walk past historic relics from times gone by.



Getting there

The Howqua Hills Historic Area is located 45 minutes drive from Mansfield via Merrijig. Take the Howqua Track, a gravel road 3km past Merrijig on the Mount Buller Road.

Things to see and do

Camping

Camping along the Howqua River is one of the best ways to enjoy this historic area and offers a great base for bushwalking, fishing and relaxing.

There are several flats available beside the river, including popular Fry's Flat, Sheeppark Flat and Davons Flat.

No booking is required. Camping is on a first in, first-served basis.

Basic toilets and fire-rings are provided.

Walking

Walkers can enjoy the Howqua Hills Heritage Trail with its self-guided interpretive panels. This easy 3km return walk follows the Howqua River from Sheeppark Flat to Fry's Flat and should take approximately 1.5 hours at a gentle pace.

Other walks that start nearby include the High and Low Tracks along the Howqua, Lickhole Creek and Eagles Peaks.

Horse riding

Horse riding (seasonally from November to May) is a great way to explore the Howqua Hills Historic Area. Horse-yards are available at Fry's Flat and Tunnel Bend Flat with further yards located nearby in the Alpine National Park. Horse-yard bookings must be arranged prior to arrival on

www.parks.vic.gov.au/stay

Relics from the past

Tunnel Bend is named after the 100m tunnel built in 1884 as a link between the Howqua River and a four kilometre long hand cut water race. The tunnel entrance can be seen near the base of the steps at Tunnel Bend.

The remains of the water race can be seen above the road between Tunnel Bend and Sheeppark Flat. It was constructed to carry water to power the "Hanney" waterwheel. The "Hanney" was 63 feet (18 metres) in diameter and drove the crushers which broke the ore into a suitable size for smelting in the furnace. The brick chimney and smelting furnace, built in 1884, is still standing and is visible on the Heritage Walk between Sheeppark Flat and Fry's Flat.

Fry's Hut

Master Bushman, Fred Fry built his home in the early 1940s. Using split timber and with his own personal style of workmanship he erected many huts in the region including Upper Jamieson Hut, Ritchies Hut, Gardiners Hut and Noonans. Fred's life in the Howqua Valley was the basis of Neville Shute's 1950 novel 'The Far Country'.

Overnight camping is not permitted in Fry's Hut.

Caring for the park

Help us look after your park by following these guidelines:

- Please take rubbish home with you for recycling and disposal.
- All native plants and animals are protected by law, please do not disturb or feed them in any way.
- Dogs are permitted but must be on a leash or under control at all times.
- Do not disturb or remove any fossil, relic or historic artefact.
- Collect only dead, fallen timber for firewood. Keep your fire small and never leave it unattended.
- Dish-washing water and showers must be 50 metres from the river.
- Observe seasonal road closures – Fry's Flat, Noonans Flat and Howqua Hills Track.
- Drive only on formed roads and tracks.

Be prepared and stay safe

Howqua Hills Historic Area is in the North-East fire district. Bushfire safety is a personal responsibility. Anyone entering parks and forests during the bushfire season needs to stay aware of forecast weather conditions. Check the Fire Danger Rating and for days of Total Fire Ban at

www.emergency.vic.gov.au, on the VicEmergency smartphone app or call the VicEmergency Hotline on 1800 226 226. No fires may be lit on Total Fire Ban days.

On Code Red Fire Danger Rating days this park will be closed for public safety. Closure signs will be erected but do not expect an official warning. Check the latest conditions at www.parks.vic.gov.au or by calling 13 1963.

For emergency assistance call Triple Zero (000). If there is a green emergency marker sign near you, read the information on the marker to the operator.