Macedon Ranges Shire Thematic Environmental History

Prepared for Macedon Ranges Shire Council

October 2023

Adopted by Macedon Ranges Shire Council 13 December 2023

GML HERITAGE

Acknowledgement of Country

We respect and acknowledge the Dja Dja Wurrung, the Taungurung and the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung peoples, their lands and waterways, their rich cultural heritage and their deep connection to Country, and we acknowledge their Elders past and present. We are committed to truth-telling and to engaging with Traditional Owners to support the protection of their culture and heritage.

We strongly advocate social and cultural justice and support the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Cultural warning

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this report may contain the names of First Nations people who have passed away.

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Report register

The following report register documents the development of this report, in accordance with **GML's** Quality Management System.

Job No.	Issue	Description	Issued to	Issue Date
2926	1	Draft report	Dr Dannielle Orr, Macedon Ranges Shire Council	8 May 2022
2926	2	Final report	Dr Dannielle Orr, Macedon Ranges Shire Council	15 August 2023
2926	3	Revised Final Report	Dr Dannielle Orr, Macedon Ranges Shire Council	31 October 2023

Quality assurance

The report has been reviewed and approved for issue in accordance with the GML quality assurance policy and procedures.

Executive summary

In December 2021, Macedon Ranges Shire Council engaged GML Heritage Victoria (GML) to prepare a Thematic Environmental History (TEH) of Macedon Ranges Shire.

A Thematic Environmental History is a report developed for a municipality or local government area (LGA) that serves as a tool in heritage planning. The purpose of the thematic history is to identify and understand the key historical themes in the development of a municipality which will assist in identifying and assessing heritage places within an LGA.

The study area is the municipal area of the Macedon Ranges Shire. There are three Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) for Macedon Ranges Shire, including Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, Taungurung Land and Waters Council Aboriginal Corporation, and Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation.

The scope of the project included researching and writing a TEH of Macedon Ranges Shire, which outlines the historical development of the area from European settlement through to the present day. The TEH traces the development of the area, noting the key developments, influences and important events that have shaped the character of the Macedon Ranges Shire.

This work builds on previous heritage reports prepared for the former municipalities of the Shire of Kyneton and the Shires of Gisborne, Newham and Woodend, and Romsey comprising the Macedon Ranges area. These reports are:

- Volume 2 'Background History, Architecture and Architects, Bibliography' by
- Susan Priestley, 'Shire of Kyneton Conservation (Heritage) Study' (1990); and
- Volume 2 'Environmental History' by Dr Chris McConville, *Macedon Ranges Cultural Heritage and Landscape Study* (1994).

The following key tasks have informed the development of this report:

- identifying key resources and developing a list of for the project;
- investigating the historical development (i.e. social, physical and economic change) of Macedon Ranges Shire, through historical research;
- sourcing historical maps and plans, and historical images of Macedon Ranges Shire;

- receiving input from the Macedon Ranges Shire Council officers and key stakeholders regarding historical themes and places of potential heritage significance; and
- identifying the relevant historical themes for the Macedon Ranges Shire, using **Victoria's** Framework of Historical Themes.

This report includes some background on the rich Aboriginal heritage of Macedon Ranges and the wider area, but this is limited as a full investigation into this subject was not possible.

The project brief provided by Macedon Ranges Shire Council required that historical research would be limited to secondary source material, including:

- existing heritage and conservation studies for Macedon Ranges Shire;
- local histories;
- the Victorian Heritage Database; and
- selected PhD and Masters theses.

As such, only a limited review of primary source material has been undertaken. This included readily available historical maps and plans, and historical images accessible through State Library Victoria, Public Records Office Victoria and the National Library of Aust**ralia's 'Trove'** platform. There was a limited review of digitised newspapers, available through Trove, which were consulted for high priority themes that were not addressed in secondary source material. Further review of primary source material would yield additional information that would inform the historical themes explored in the report.

Consultation with the Traditional Owner organisations was outside the scope of this project. As a result, information about the Aboriginal history and heritage associated with the municipality has been limited to readily available documentary sources.

This report was authored by Dr Robyn Ballinger of History Making Pty Ltd with input from Dr Helen Doyle (Associate) and Freya Keam (Senior Consultant) of GML Heritage.

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Introduction

Macedon Ranges Shire is located on the traditional Country of the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung peoples. A number of significant Aboriginal cultural heritage sites in the Macedon Ranges Shire provide evidence of the rich Aboriginal history of the area and remain important to Aboriginal cultural life and identity.

As part of its post-contact history, the Macedon Ranges Shire comprises pastoral country, farmland, forest towns and early transport corridors that link Melbourne to central and northern Victoria.

The municipality is one of the earliest settled areas of colonial Victoria and retains landscapes that reflect the different periods of its history. The area includes the towns of Gisborne, Kyneton, Lancefield, Macedon, Malmsbury, Mount Macedon, Riddells Creek, Romsey, and Woodend, which expanded as a result of the construction of the Melbourne–Bendigo section of the Melbourne and Murray River railway line. It also includes a scattering of smaller towns and hamlets, many of which were established in response to the needs of travellers along the goldfields roads or to accommodate forest workers.

As a backdrop to, and also in a close relationship with, the local towns, agricultural areas have played a significant role in shaping the development of Macedon Ranges Shire, not only from a socio-economic perspective but also aesthetically (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 1:1).

Statement of Significance

The Macedon Ranges Shire occupies Traditional Country of the Dja Dja Wurrung, the Taungurung and the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation, and the area has great significance to the Traditional Owners for its rich Aboriginal history. There are many places within the Shire that are significant to Aboriginal people, including the Wil-im-ee Moor-ring (Mount William) quarry site, which is important for the production of 'greenstone' axes by Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, who traded these axes over a wide area of southeast Australia.

Macedon Ranges Shire comprises a varied landscape that includes undulating plains, grasslands, volcanic features and forested areas. It is well-watered with two rivers, a

number of creeks, as well as springs and soaks, with Mount Macedon being the head of the Campaspe River. The municipality also features a mineral spring near Kyneton. The diverse areas of the Shire have influenced its physical and economic development and have also been the basis for much of the recreation and tourism in the area. Mount Macedon itself is a prominent landmark that both defines and dominates the area and forms an important visual marker from outside the municipality, including from Melbourne.

The municipality is significant as one of the earliest areas of Victoria to be occupied for grazing and farming purposes by colonial settlers, initially by pastoralists in the 1830s and 1840s and later by farmers who supplied produce to the goldfields. The majority of farmers were immigrants from Scotland, England and Ireland. Key farming areas were Lancefield and Romsey to the east and Kyneton to the west; major crops included grains, chicory, potatoes and peas. Farming remained a significant industry until the 1960s, with most residents up to the that time working locally and most dependent on agriculture. The municipality was an important wine-growing region in the nineteenth century, and areas of Lancefield, Romsey, Hesket and Newham have returned to wine-growing. Vineyards were established from the 1840s in the districts of Riddells Creek, Carlsruhe and Darraweit Guim. The municipality retains landscape features which reflect the various stages of farming activity and changing land legislation since the 1850s.

The municipality is significant as a gateway to the goldfields and for servicing major transport routes, notably Mount Alexander Road (now the Calder Freeway). This was the genesis of many of the hotels in the municipality that were established to service the goldfields traffic. This route was used for the establishment of Caroline Chisholm shelter sheds, which were designed to assist women and children travelling to and from the goldfields. The construction of the Melbourne and Murray River railway line in the early 1860s was associated with the development of a number of small towns in the Shire.

The municipality is significant for its rich timber resources and associated forest industries that were a mainstay of towns and settlements. Since the beginning of colonial settlement, the forests have provided timber for sawmills, railway sleepers, fence posts, piles, firewood, building materials and mining apparatus. In addition, the forests have been used for honey-production, charcoal production, wattle-barking and grazing. Settlers in the Macedon Ranges Shire often supplemented their farm income by working as sawyers and splitters in the many timber mills that operated. Other settlers found employment in utilising timber by-products and by establishing eucalyptus distilleries and charcoal retorts, as these industries required little up-front capital. The forest heritage of the area is also associated with bushfires, which have been severe in the area, and this in turn is related to the development of fire-fighting and improving education about forestry and fire.

The municipality is also significant for its fine building stone, particularly Malmsbury bluestone, Lauriston sandstone and Gisborne slate. Many of the built structures in the Shire have employed local stone and local timber in their construction.

The municipality was important in the early development of manufacturing in Victoria, particularly in the development of flour mills, dairy factories and flax mills. The Shire was an important supplier of grain and flour to the goldfields, where the goldrush created great demand. The municipality was also important for its wider role in manufacturing, including implement and tool-making and carriageworks, and the ongoing importance of manufacturing in the twentieth century.

The municipality is significant for its long association with tourism and recreation, including the importance of Hanging Rock as a favourite tourist attraction since the late-nineteenth century and the development of Mount Macedon with hilltop estates, guesthouses and notable gardens. The Kyneton Mineral Springs reserve was also an important early tourist attraction. The development of tourism was influenced by the goldfields history of the area and the large concentration of historic buildings in many of the early towns. Various sporting and recreation pursuits have contributed to community life across the municipality, with horse-racing a long-established activity at Hanging Rock.

The municipality is significant for its large collection of notable private gardens at Mount Macedon, which is considered the most representative area of hill station gardens in Victoria. Some of these gardens exemplify the work of significant landscape designers and plant collectors. There are also two surviving nineteenth-century botanic gardens in the municipality, at Malmsbury and Kyneton, and a twentieth century botanic gardens at Gisborne. Town and parkland plantings in Gisborne, Macedon and Mount Macedon are a legacy of the early horticulturalists, nurserymen and gardeners of the region, who included William Ferguson, Nathaniel Ronalds, Charles Ryan, Taylor and Sangster, and John Smith and Sons.

The municipality is of aesthetic significance for its rich scenic qualities, particularly in relation to Mount Macedon and Hanging Rock. It is also of aesthetic significance for its fine collection of nineteenth-century bluestone buildings and bridges.

The municipality is of social significance for the many local places of long-established community importance, including schools and churches, halls, and clubs. There is also potentially strong attachment not only from the local community but from the broader Victorian community to significant locations of Hanging Rock and Mount Macedon. In relation to the Ash Wednesday bushfires that impacted the area so severely, there is social significance associated with the memorials and shelters at Macedon and Mount Macedon.

Thematic framework at a glance

The historical themes for Macedon Ranges Shire are summarised below.

Summary of historical themes for the Macedon Ranges Shire.

Historical themes for Macedon Ranges Shire	Summary of each theme
1 Shaping the environment of Macedon Ranges Shire	The distinctive geology, landscape and climate of Macedon Ranges Shire is characterised by topographical features such as Mount Macedon, Hanging Rock and the Mount William Range; the flat and gently undulating volcanic plains punctuated by volcanic eruption points; and the catchments of the Maribyrnong River—the Campaspe and Coliban Rivers.
2 Peopling Macedon Ranges places and landscapes	Macedon Ranges Shire occupies the traditional Country of three language groups of the Kulin Nation: the Dja Dja Wurrung, the Taungurung and the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung peoples. They are the traditional custodians and caretakers of the land and waterways of the Shire and have an ongoing connection to Country today.
	European exploration of the area began in 1824; squatters and settlers first arrived in 1835-36; surveys for permanent settlement followed from 1845; and goldrushes brought in immigrants from China, Scotland and Ireland from the 1850s, to make up the diverse community of Macedon Ranges Shire today.
3 Connecting Macedon Ranges Shire by transport and communications	Transport and communication networks have played an important role in connecting the residents of Macedon Ranges Shire both within their own locality and to the wider world. The Shire is intersected by two major transport corridors: the road to the Castlemaine and Bendigo goldfields, now the Calder Freeway, and the Melbourne and Mildura railway line. Most of the centres of population in the Shire are located along these routes, and these became commutable from Melbourne with the opening of the Tullamarine Freeway in 1970. In addition, services provided by mail runs, post and telegraph offices, and the telephone have played a vital part in connecting people in the Shire.
4. Transforming and managing the land and its natural resources	The land, water and natural resources of Macedon Ranges Shire have been adapted and transformed since the mid-1830s to support pastoralism, agriculture and viticulture, and extractive industries such as forestry, gold-mining and quarrying. Waterways have also been adapted to supply water storages.
5 Building Macedon Ranges Shire industries and workforce	Early commercial activity in the Macedon Ranges Shire included inns, stores and blacksmiths that serviced travellers to the goldfields and the emerging agricultural settlements. Since the late nineteenth century, accommodation and infrastructure has been established to attract tourists. Macedon Ranges Shire has also been a centre for processing raw materials and manufacturing.
6. Building the hamlets, villages, towns and regional	The first settlements emerged in the Macedon Ranges Shire from the late 1830s. Early settlements were located at stopping

Historical themes for Macedon Ranges Shire	Summary of each theme
cities of Macedon Ranges Shire	places along major transport routes or where they served a particular land-use activity, such as sawmilling or gold-mining. A greater number of government services and commercial operations developed in the larger towns. In the twentieth century, changing economic factors and altered transport routes affected the development of towns and smaller settlements, and often led to decline.
7 Governing Macedon Ranges Shire	The local government administration of settlements developed from the 1850s, and saw the declaration of towns, boroughs and shires. Four municipalities were amalgamated in 1995 to create the Macedon Ranges Shire: Gisborne, Kyneton, Newham and Woodend, and Romsey. State government responsibilities in Macedon Ranges Shire included post and telegraph, and defence (until 1901), as well as policing and law and order.
8 Building community life	A wide range of endeavours and activities make up the rich history of community life of the Macedon Ranges Shire. Often enabled by public funding, many local institutions and their surviving buildings reflect the energetic and visionary commitment of individuals, organisations and local communities over many decades. The relatively early and concentrated pattern of settlement in the Shire produced a rich legacy of community activity and associated community places, including churches, schools, hospitals and public halls.
9 Shaping cultural and creative life	Many places in Macedon Ranges Shire have contributed to the development of cultural pursuits, including the arts, sport and recreation, which have played an important role in shaping the history, identity and self-expression of the Shire, its people and its many communities. The arts have played a vital role in its development and a number of notable artists and collections have connections and associations to Macedon Ranges Shire.

1 Shaping the environment of Macedon Ranges Shire

1. Shaping the environment of Macedon Ranges Shire

The distinctive geology, landscape and climate of Macedon Ranges Shire is characterised by topographical features such as Mount Macedon, Hanging Rock and the Mount William Range; the flat and gently undulating volcanic plains punctuated by volcanic eruption points; and the catchments of the Maribyrnong River—the Campaspe and Coliban Rivers.

1.1 Tracing climate and topographic change

Climate change

The climate in south-east Australia has changed over millennia, in accordance with broader patterns.

Generally, Macedon Ranges Shire experiences a temperate climate with warm, dry summers and cool winters, although combinations of altitude and regional topography result in the occurrence of localised conditions. As part of the Great Dividing Range, for example, Mount Macedon forces moisture-bearing winds to rise, thereby causing rain to fall in its vicinity. The Macedon Ranges can receive regular snow falls in winter months (MRSC 2022). The Macedon Ranges Shire has average summer temperatures of 13–29° Celsius and average winter temperatures of 4–14° Celsius. Currently, the average rainfall is 750–800mm per year and the average number of frosts per year is 35 (MRSC 2022).

The climate has changed globally since the Industrial Revolution—especially since the mid-twentieth century—and is projected to continue to change, as a result of carbon emissions associated with human activity. Climate projections for the Loddon Campaspe region, which includes the Macedon Ranges Shire, predict a continuing increase in maximum and minimum daily temperatures over the twenty-first century. By the 2030s, increases in daily maximum temperature of 0.8–1.7°C (since the 1990s) are expected (Clarke 2019:1–2).

Rainfall will continue to be very variable over time, but over the long term it is expected to continue to decline in winter, spring and autumn, with some chance of little change. Extreme rainfall events are expected to become more intense on average through the century but remain very variable in space and time (Clarke 2019:1).

In response to climate change, the Macedon Ranes Shire Council Climate Change Action Plan (2017) focuses on how Council will reduce emissions from its own activities to minimise its impact on global climate change. It also outlines how Council will influence key stakeholders and support the community in reducing emissions (MRSC 2017: 4).

Geology and geomorphology

The Macedon Ranges Shire is part of the Central Victorian Uplands, commonly known as the Central Highlands, that extend east–west through central Victoria. The Uplands comprise a belt of relatively high country, which becomes narrower and lower towards the west. Its crest forms a sinuous divide between the rivers that flow northward to the Murray River and those that take more direct southward routes to the ocean. This divide is called the Great Dividing Range, however it is not a range in the strict sense but a complex of plateaus, ridges and corridors (Cochrane 1995: 66).

The Central Victorian Uplands are divided into the East Victorian Uplands and the West Victorian Uplands. The Macedon Ranges Shire is a part of the West Victorian Uplands and is included in the smaller geomorphic unit known as the Dissected Uplands (Midlands).

The origin of the West Victorian Uplands dates back to uplift during the Cretaceous period (approximately 143 million years ago), with further uplift occurring in Middle Tertiary times (approximately 37 million years ago) followed by doming, fault activity, earthquakes and volcanism that extended progressively westwards (Joyce 1992: 407).

Much of the Dissected Uplands consists of Lower Paleozoic granodiorite and folded sandstones and shales. The dominant features are the low north-south ranges and intervening broad relatively low-lying corridors of valleys, plains and undulating country (Cochrane 1995: 66). The basalt plains of the Macedon Ranges Shire formed around the Uplands during the New Volcanics period of approximately 6.8 million years ago, when slow lava flows filled the older river valleys and earlier volcanic formations (Claire Scott Planning 2019: 41). The Trentham area appears to have been the source of a large amount of the basalt between Trentham and Kyneton. Much of the basalt north of Kyneton is likely derived from eruption centres near Green Hill. The Spring Hill flows flowed northeast from the Spring Hill area. The flows between Denver and Malmsbury originated from Kangaroo Hill, Denver and a smaller centre just north of Patten Hill, Drummond (Willman 2002: 59–60).

Uplands

Landscape features within the Uplands of the Shire include Mount Macedon (1010 metres above sea-level) and surrounding foothills, the Cobaw Range, and the metamorphic aureole of the McHarg Range, all formed by volcanic activity and erosion over millions of years. Other features include Hanging Rock, the Monument (also known as Brock's Monument), the Camel's Hump and the Jim Jim—the latter was also caused by a volcanic

eruption (Claire Scott Planning 2019:15). Hanging Rock (also known as Mount Diogenes) is a mamelon, which is a formation made of external viscous rock that is volcanic in origin and which weathers unevenly to create unusual forms. The Mount William Range, 700 metres above sea level, is another high point in the Shire.

Volcanic plains

The flat to gently undulating plains of the Macedon Ranges Shire are scattered with volcanic features such as old eruption points and volcanic mounds. The volcanic cones of Mount Gisborne (700 metres), Melbourne Hill (600 metres) and Mount Bullengarook (700 metres) rise above the plains (Claire Scott Planning 2019:41).
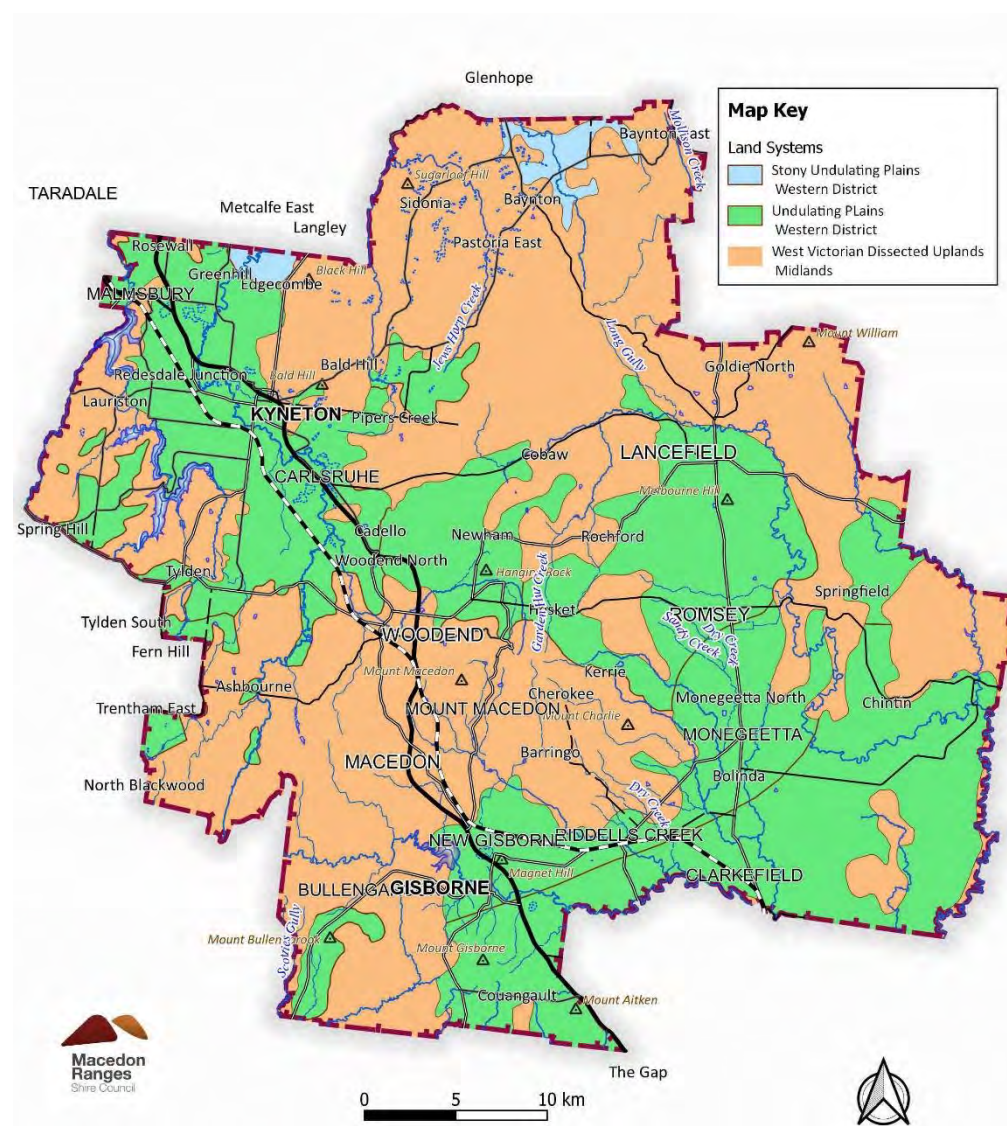
Figure 1.1 The north–south ranges of the uplands (in green) and volcanic plains (in orange) of Macedon Ranges Shire. (Source: MRSC 2022)

Waterways and springs

The Macedon Ranges Shire is almost evenly divided between the Maribyrnong River catchment and the Campaspe and Coliban River catchments. A small area also falls within the Goulburn River Catchment (MRSC 2022).

The Macedon Ranges provides the headwaters for four major Victorian waterways: the Campaspe and Coliban rivers to the north, which make their way to Lake Eppalock and on toward the Murray River; and the Maribyrnong and Werribee rivers to the south, the which feed into the Maribyrnong River before joining the Yarra River in central Melbourne which flows into Port Phillip Bay (MRSC 2022).

The Coliban River and the Campaspe River are the main rivers within the Shire, with the major creeks comprising Deep Creek, Riddells Creek and Jackson Creek.

Figure 1.2 The waterbodies and rivers and creeks of Macedon Ranges Shire. (Source: MRSC 2022)

Pyrites Creek is also a major waterway to the west of the municipality, and it is a major feeder for the Merrimu Reservoir (outside the Shire), which supplies Bacchus Marsh and Melton. There are also numerous springs in the Shire and one mineral spring at Boggy Creek in Kyneton.

Soils

Rich soils occur between Lancefield, Hesket and Romsey; around Clarkefield; between Macedon and Riddells Creek; northeast of Gisborne; east and west of Kyneton; and in the valleys around Baynton and Sidonia (State of Victoria 2019: 30).

Elsewhere, in the central and south-western areas of the Shire around Ashbourne, Macedon and Woodend, soils have low fertility and are prone to erosion (MRSC 2022).

The majority of farming activity in Macedon Ranges Shire occurs on the rich soils of the volcanic plains.

1.2 Tracing the emergence of Macedon Ranges' plants and animals

Flora and fauna

Within the Macedon Ranges Shire there is a wide diversity of plant communities occupying varying environments created by different altitudes, aspects and soils (MRSC 2018: 28).

The Victorian Government has classified the different combinations of species into Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs). EVCs are determined by vegetation structure and floristics, land systems and other environmental information including geology, aspect, slope, elevation, rainfall, fire frequency and ecological responses to disturbance (MRSC 2018: 28).

Macedon Ranges Shire has 33 different EVCs represented across three bioregions (Victorian Volcanic Plains, Central Victorian Uplands and Goldfields) that cover a range of broad vegetation types including woodlands, grasslands, forests and wetlands. The most extensive remnant vegetation persists on soils too steep or poor to farm, or forests set aside for timber production that occur on public land. Important smaller fragments of grassland or woodland can be found across the Shire on public and private land (MRSC 2018: 28).

Several flora species listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* are known to occur within the Shire. Of these, four have more than 20 per cent of their Victorian range located in the shire: the Black Gum (*Eucalyptus aggregata*), Hairy-leaf Triggerplant

(*Stylidium armeria* subsp. *Pilosifolium*), Wombat Bush-pea (*Pultenaea reflexifolia*) and Swamp Bush Pea (*Pultenaea weindorferi*).

Broad vegetation types found across the Shire can be seen below, which is reproduced from the Macedon Ranges Shire Council Biodiversity Strategy (2018).

Table 1.1 A summary of the broad vegetation types found across the Shire. (Source: MRSC 2018: 29–30)

Vegetation type	Description
Montane	Sub-alpine Low Woodland dominated by Snow Gums found only on Mount Macedon. Photo: David Francis
Wet Forests	Wet Forests on Mount Macedon occur in sheltered gullies with towering Mountain Ash trees and giant tree ferns. Messmate dominated damp forests occur through less sheltered areas. Known for diverse fungi. Photo: William Terry
Dry forests	Encompasses the open, dry forests of the foothills. Taller Eucalypt dominated with understorey of wattles, peas and grasses.

Vegetation type	Description
	 Photo: MRSC
Woodlands	Open Eucalypt areas on lower lying hills and alluvial areas with a rich understorey of grasses, pea and herbs. In the Shire, woodlands generally occur on relatively fertile soils and have a grassy understorey. Photo: Krista-Patterson Majoor
Grasslands	Grasslands with a species rich understorey of shrubs, grasses and herbs and sparse Manna Gum and Swamp Gum. Local grassland communities are restricted to the fertile volcanic plains. Most former grasslands have been cleared or degraded and are highly endangered. Photo: Nadya Koronfsky
Riparian Grassy Woodlands	Found in isolated pockets along smaller seasonal streams on the plains and lower slopes of foothills. Open woodlands with an overstorey usually dominated on the plains by River Red Gum. Manna Gum may be found in the foothills.

Vegetation type	Description

Photo: MRSC

Vegetation type	Description
Wetlands	Natural wetlands are not common in the Shire, either because they have been drained/cleared or the terrain is too hilly. However, a range of wetland plants can still be found within artificial wetland habitats such as lakes, dams and water storage areas. The Gisborne Marshlands is a nationally significant remnant wetland.

Photo: William Terry

The Shire is also rich in fauna species, some of which are threatened or endangered, including the Powerful Owl, Brush-tailed Phascogale, Greater Glider, Brown Toadlet, Brown Treecreeper and the Yarra Pygmy-perch. Other significant species include the Platypus, Wombat and Koala (MRSC 2018: 33–34).

Significant contributions to improving flora and fauna restoration across the Shire have been made through programs such as Land for Wildlife and Landcare; this restoration has been happening since the 1980s.

The collection of lepidopterist George Lyell, held at Museum Victoria, makes an important contribution to the natural history of the region. Born in Gisborne in 1866, Lyell collected almost 12,000 butterflies and 40,000 moths in his lifetime; a legacy he donated to the state between 1932 and 1946. The collection also includes his papers (Atlas of Living

Australia 2023). The collection is invaluable today for determining the impacts of climate change on the Victorian environment (University of Melbourne 2023).

Figure 1.2 *Heteronympha merope merope* Common Brown Butterfly (male), collected by George Lyell in Gisborne, 1911. (Source: Museums Victoria, Specimen LEP 12242)

Figure 1.3 *Heteronympha merope merope* Common Brown Butterfly (female), collected by George Lyell in Gisborne, 1912. (Source: Museums Victoria, Specimen LEP 12255)

1.3 Creation stories and defining Country

The Macedon Ranges Shire sits within a broader landscape of importance to the Kulin people, who have occupied this country for millennia. The Traditional Owners include three language groups of the Kulin Nation—Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung. Archaeological records currently date occupation to between 30,000 and 40,000 years ago.

Cultural knowledge about the meanings and significance of landforms within Macedon Ranges Shire is not widely known and is not publicly available. As there are three different tribes associated with Macedon Ranges Shire it is likely that places may have different meanings to different groups. There are accounts of the Aboriginal significance of the **Camel's Hump and of Hanging Rock**, the latter being a place of initiation for the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people (McConville 2016: 28, 42).

Some of the names that were given to places have been recorded. While visiting and studying Hanging Rock in the mid-1850s, the German naturalist Wilhelm Blandowski recorded its Aboriginal name, Anneyelong (Clark 2014); this place was also recorded as Ngannelong. The Kulin names Gebor and Tararewait both refer to Mount Macedon (Arden 1841: 93). Other Kulin names in the Shire include Bullengarook, Darraweit Guim, Monegeetta, (Mount) Jim Jim and Toolern Creek.

1.4 Living with natural processes

Fire

Fire was used by Aboriginal people as a land management tool, both to stimulate new plant growth and generate new pasture. Fire was also used to reduce the amount of combustible material and hence reduce the opportunity for extreme fire events.

Since white settlement, several major bushfires have been recorded in the Macedon Ranges Shire. One of the earliest was Black Thursday, which took place in February 1851 when fire raged across large parts of Victoria, including the Gisborne and Mount Macedon districts. Other major bushfires occurred in 1865, 1898 and 1926 (Boxshall 2017: 90).

Fires in 1904 and 1905 destroyed pasture and stock around the Black Range. In 1939, the catastrophic 'Black Friday' fires again burnt through the region. Fire threatened Gisborne in 1944 and in January 1973 bushfires raced through parts of the Macedon Ranges Shire. In 1983, two fires, including the catastrophic Ash Wednesday fires of 16 February, destroyed the townships of Macedon and Mount Macedon. 400 homes in the area were burned, and many public and community buildings were also lost, including the Macedon CWA Hall and several churches ('Ash Wednesday Memorial' Monument Australia 2023; *Age*, 22 April 1983: 54). Seven people in the district lost their lives in the fires. In 2009, the 'Black Saturday' bushfires impacted Baynton, and further north to the Redesdale area (outside the Shire), where properties were lost. More recently, fires have occurred in Gisborne South (2014), Lancefield–Cobaw (2015), Edgecombe (2016), and Baynton and Benloch (2019) (MRSC 2018: 43). Extensive fires were recorded in Bullengarook and Pyrete Range (now an eastern inclusion in Lederberg State Park) in 1895, 1904–05, 1919, 1933 and 1952 (Forest Fire Management Victoria 2023).

Floods

There have been a number of significant flooding events in the Shire, particularly at Kyneton on the Coliban River and more recently along Deep Creek at Darraweit Guim in 2022.

In Gisborne, major floods occurred in 1880, 1891 and 1935 following heavy rainfall (*Bacchus Marsh Express*, 18 Sept 1880: 3; 8 Aug 1891: 2; *Argus*, 22 April 1935: 8).

Flood levels have sometimes been recorded in the past at the site of their occurrence. The 1909 flood level is noted by the marker on Hodges Bridge, for instance, on Boundary Road, Greenhill and Edgecombe.

Figure 1.4 1909 flood level marker at Hodges Bridge in Macedon Ranges Shire. (Source: MRSC 2022)

1.5 Appreciating and protecting the natural wonders of Macedon Ranges Shire

Mount Macedon Shire is a remarkable landscape of volcanic hills, granite outcrops. It was recognised for its enormous trees and unusual species of vegetation. Although extensively altered through land-use patterns such as mining and timber-cutting, large areas have been protected through various measures such as the declaration of national parks.

Victoria is home to a number of unique and sensitive landscapes and distinctive places that are highly valued for their environmental, social, cultural and economic assets. On 16 August 2018 the Macedon Ranges **Shire's** landscape became the first area in Victoria to be recognised for these values under the *Planning and Environment Amendment (Distinctive Areas and Landscapes) Act 2018* (DELWP 2022). Some of the natural **features that contribute to the Shire's unique landscape are described below.**

Mount Gisborne is the highest of the distinctive group of volcanic hills in the Gisborne-Sunbury area. This volcano is of state geological significance because it has a longer and more complex lava eruption sequence than any other Newer Volcanics eruption point.

Three lava types are recognised at the eruption point and none of these occur together at any other eruption point in the state (Victorian Resources Online 2023a).

Melbourne Hill is an elongated lava mound with at least two points of eruption. It is of regional geological significance because several lavas of differing composition were erupted. From the northern end a flow of limburgitic basalt has been partly covered by a later flow of olivine basalt (Victorian Resources Online 2023b).

The eruption point of Mount Bullengarook is a prominent rounded landscape feature. Of regional geological significance, it is the source of a lava flow that extends over 20 kilometres to the south and fills the ancient Bullengarook valley. Scoria accumulations of this size are unusual in Macedon Ranges Shire (Victorian Resources Online 2023c).

Hanging Rock, of national geological significance, is an unusual volcano for Victoria both in terms of its form and rock composition. It lies along the time boundary between the Older Volcanics and Newer Volcanics series (Late Miocene) and results from a process of magma differentiation that is restricted to two small areas of Victoria (Gisborne/Woodend and Daylesford) (Victorian Resources Online 2023d). The reserve also contains one of the few remaining remnants of the vegetation that occurred in the area between the Macedon Ranges and the Cobaw Ranges prior to European settlement (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 3:96).

The Gisborne Racecourse Marshland Reserve is one of the few remaining naturally occurring wetlands in the Shire and contains nationally significant vegetation (MRSC 2019).

In 1843 fossil deposits dating from the Pleistocene period containing species of extinct megafauna were discovered at the Lancefield Swamp (Woodhouse 2020:1). Excavations of the swamp show that a bone bed dated at 26,000 years ago contains the remains of perhaps 10,000 megafauna. Associated artifacts suggest that humans were also in the area. Such a recent date for the classic megafauna shows that these animals were living together with humans for at least 7000 years in southeast Australia (Gillespie 1978:1044). Another fossil site was discovered in 1846 a cave near Gisborne (*Australasian*, 15 July 1916:43).

Remnant vegetation has been protected across Macedon Ranges Shire through the reservation of public land. Although the landscape has been extensively cleared for farming and to supply timber, public land comprises 10 per cent of the Shire, which includes the Black Forest, Woodend; Cobaw State Forest; part of Lerderderg State Park; Macedon Regional Park and part of the Wombat State Forest (MRSC 2018:26). Other areas comprise Bald Hill Reserve, Black Forest Nature Reserve, Conglomerate Gully

Reserve, Hanging Rock Reserve, Lauriston Bushland Reserve, Mount Charlie Flora and Fauna Reserve, Slaty Creek Nature Reserve and T Hill Flora Reserve. Other council-managed bushland reserves include Barringo Reserve, Black Hill Reserve, Browning Street Conservation Reserve, Gisborne Racecourse Marshlands Reserve, Hobbs Road Reserve, Magnet Hill, Malmsbury Common, Mount Gisborne Reserve, Sandy Creek Reserve, Stanley Park, U L Daly Nature Reserve, and Woodend Grassland Reserve. These areas have been protected through the action of local residents and local government and the introduction of State legislation.

Koalas were introduced to Black Hill Reserve in Kyneton in 1944 as part of a project to establish a koala sanctuary (*Kyneton Guardian*, 28 March 1944).

2 Peopling Macedon Ranges' Shire places and landscapes

2. Peopling Macedon Ranges Shire places and landscapes

Macedon Ranges Shire occupies the traditional Country of three language groups of the Kulin Nation: the Dja Dja Wurrung, the Taungurung and the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung peoples. They are the traditional custodians and caretakers of the land and waterways of the Shire and have an ongoing connection to Country today.

European exploration of the area began in 1824; squatters and settlers first arrived in 1835–1836; and surveys for permanent settlement followed from 1845. From the 1850s the goldrushes attracted immigrants from China, Scotland and Ireland, contributing to the diverse community of Macedon Ranges Shire today.

2.1 Living as Macedon Ranges' original inhabitants

For tens of thousands of years, Aboriginal people have lived with and gently modified the land and waterways to secure sufficient resources for human survival. Aboriginal people are deeply committed to caring for Country, and using and managing the land, water and resources in a manner that was both sustainable and in line with their spiritual beliefs and cultural practices.

This was a well-watered and resource-rich area, with a variety of landscape types, including grasslands, forests and volcanic soils. Aboriginal diet relied on a wide variety of animals and birds, as well as plant foods. Plants and animals also provided the material for shelters (willams), making tools and weapons, containers, bags and baskets, and making clothing and rugs, jewellery and other forms of personal ornamentation.

The Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung peoples learnt over thousands of years where water could be sourced, even in dry seasons. The sequence and location of water sources were memorised and passed down from generation to generation and mapped physically on tools used for hunting. The most permanent sources of water could be found in river and creek waterholes and at underground springs.

A light tree cover was maintained on the rich flats through firing the ground seasonally. This practice stimulated the regrowth of vegetation, which not only managed the timber load and helped avert bushfire but also sustained hunting grounds for grazing animals like kangaroos and wallabies. The Kulin people built earthen ovens on the banks of

creeks and rivers. They also designed and constructed fish traps at the edge of lakes and lagoons and harvested plants, such as the root vegetable murnong (Yam Daisy), which was a mainstay of their diet (Zola and Gott 1992: 7–9).

Spiritual life was deeply interconnected with the land, waters and sky, and spiritual beliefs were integral to existence and informed complex cultural practices. At the time of early settlement the Mount Macedon clan of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung included a traditional Aboriginal doctor or healer named Yammerboke, also known as Malcolm (Clark, Clarke and Cahir 2018: 193).

Hanging Rock was an important place of ceremony, meetings and trade (McConville 2017). It is a highly significant site to the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung peoples who together are involved in the strategic planning for this site.

For the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people**, whom settlers referred to as the 'Yarra tribe',** the Mount Macedon area lies at the northwest extent of their Country and the summit of Mount Macedon provided an important vantage point. At the time of settlement, the Wurundjeri Woi-**wurrung clan that occupied the area defined as 'south east o**f Mount **Macedon to Gisborne and Toolern Creek' was the Gunung willam balug.**

One of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung clan leaders in the 1840s was known as Poerroegy / Ningolobil / Ninggolibil, who was also known as John Bull or Captain Turnbull (Close 2021: 5-2, 49-21). The Dja Dja Wurrung, also known as the Loddon tribe, occupied a large part of central Victoria**, 'from the eastern slopes of Mount Macedon to the Pyrenees in the west' (Brough Smyth 1878, vol 2:154), while the** Country of the Taungurung, who **were referred to by settlers as the 'Goulburn tribe', includes an area in the east of the** Macedon Ranges Shire.

Many archaeological sites in the Shire are important cultural heritage places, such as burial sites and grinding stones. A number of places in Macedon Ranges Shire have special significance to First Nations people, notably the Mount William Quarry (Wil-im-ee Moor-ring), which is an important source of greenstone for the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people. Greenstone was a prized stone that was used to make stone-hatchets. The Mount William Quarry has been used for thousands of years by the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, who manufactured stone hatchets at the site and traded these over a wide area of southeast Australia. Mount William is one of the most visible Aboriginal cultural heritage places in the Shire.

There are also occurrences of another hard stone, known as tachylyte, which was used by the Dja Dja Wurrung to make tools and implements and for ceremony and traditional practice.

2.2 Fighting for identity

The invasion of their Country by pastoral settlers from the mid-1830s severely disrupted the lives of Aboriginal people in the Macedon area. The settlement of New South Wales by the British had also effectively claimed all the country south of the Murray River for the British Crown. Aboriginal people in Victoria, however, did not cede their Country and continued to fight for the right to occupy Country and to use the land, water and resources.

In 1835 Aboriginal people were party to a meeting and possibly some form of agreement with John Batman, representing the Port Phillip Association. Batman claimed that a treaty had been agreed but how this was understood by the Kulin people is difficult to know. **Batman's alleged 'treaty' claimed 600,000 acres in an inequitable exchange for some trifling items and a 'yearly tribute'. The vast area of land claimed,** which included part of the Macedon Ranges Shire, was allocated among the members of the Port Phillip Association. One member, John Aitken, took up an area known as Mount Aitken in 1836.

Settler colonialism resulted in loss of Country, loss of resources, the denial of civil liberties and a myriad of other injustices. Settlers also brought diseases and alcohol that severely impacted Aboriginal people. Conflict between the traditional landholders and the pastoral intruders resulted in many First Nations people being killed by settlers and created a situation of fear and retaliation. Pastoralist John Coppock took part in a retaliatory attack on Aboriginal people at Barfold pastoral station in 1838, in which seven Dja Dja Wurrung people were killed (University of Newcastle 2022).

From the outset, the British colonial authorities established various strategies for managing the conflict between settlers and Aboriginal people. A Native Police Corps operated initially in 1837–39 and was reformed in 1842. Comprising mainly Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong men, the Native Police were tasked with keeping order on the pastoral frontier. They undertook field training at Mount Macedon in the early 1840s (Cannon 1990: 112).

The Port Phillip Protectorate was established in 1837 with the objective of protecting Aboriginal people from harm and exploitation at the hands of the settlers. A Chief Protector of Aborigines was appointed, G A Robinson, along with four assistant protectors, including Edward Stone Parker. Parker, a former Wesleyan local preacher, was appointed to the Mount Macedon district, which was also known as the north-western or Loddon protectorate. William Thomas, a Wesleyan lay preacher, who was appointed assistant protector for the Western Port district, which included Melbourne, also visited the Macedon area (Shaw 1996). Parker initially selected a site for an Aboriginal reserve at Macedon (Thiele nd: 148) before establishing a reserve at Neeriman (Hamilton's Crossing), near Maldon. In 1841, the reserve was moved to Larne-ne-barramul, which was later known as Franklinford (outside the Shire). Thomas and Parker provided the

Kulin people with rations, blankets and basic medical care. They served as missionaries of the Christian faith and endeavoured to keep the Kulin out of central Melbourne. Despite **the protectors' altruistic motives, and their efforts to provide care to the Kulin people, the** government deemed the Protectorate a failure and it was disbanded in 1849. The Protectorate had been unable to provide protection to Aboriginal people in the face of expanding settlement and had also failed meet the fundamental demands of Aboriginal people—their rights to Country.

Aboriginal groups continued to occupy the Macedon area in the 1840s (Stephens 2014). Some obtained work from the settlers. They collected firewood and water, and performed a range of manual tasks, such as fencing and chopping wood. The squatter C H Ebden had an Aboriginal servant (de Serville 1980). An Aboriginal man was employed, probably during the labour shortages of the 1850s, to deliver the mail at Kyneton (Cannon 1978). The employment of Aboriginal people in the nineteenth century was sometimes in a **formal capacity as 'servants' under the** *Master and Servants Act*, while others worked on a casual basis, often for rations rather than wages. They also sold items of value to the European settlers, such as fish, eels, and animal skins (Cahir 2018:242, 243; Cannon 1983:726).

Through the 1840s and 1850s Aboriginal society became increasingly fragmented due to the alienation of Aboriginal people from their Country, the misuse of land and waterways, and the depletion of important resources. With other Kulin who were gathered in Melbourne (a traditional Kulin meeting place), many of the so-**called 'Macedon tribe' of** the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people retaliated against the settlers and sought justice for the loss of land and other injustices implicit in British colonisation. Aboriginal people were involved in frontier conflict with the newcomers—they speared cattle in retaliation for loss of country and for ill treatment, especially of women, and they stole sheep (for food).

Aboriginal livelihoods had deteriorated significantly by the late 1840s. Attempts were made from the 1840s to secure areas of land for their own use, including for farming. The Port Phillip Protectorate was wound up in 1849, and through the 1850s Aboriginal **people were provided with even less 'protection' although Thomas** stayed on as Chief Guardian. Some reserves were provided to the Kulin people in the 1840s and 1850s but none in the area of the Macedon Ranges. The Dja Dja Wurrung people were moved to **Parker's Franklinford reserve.**

By the 1850s, Aboriginal people were increasingly fragmented due to their alienation from much of their Country, and the degradation of the land and waterways on which they relied. Aboriginal people continued to camp on Country where they could.

Traditional practices were continued on Country, such as the corroboree held in 1863 at what was then the centre of Bullengarook, at the Big Hill Store, which was recalled decades later by an early resident who witnessed it (Stakeholder consultation, 2022).

Some of the Dja Dja Wurrung people moved to Melbourne and from there moved with other Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and probably Taungurung people further up the Yarra Valley. With the closure of the Franklinford reserve in 1864 the remaining residents were made to resettle at the Coranderrk Aboriginal Reserve near Healesville.

In the 1870s and 1880s, when many of the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people were living at the Coranderrk Aboriginal Reserve, they continued to advocate for their political and cultural identity and the restitution of their fundamental rights to Country. At Coranderrk they campaigned against the closure of the reserve from the late 1870s. Following its eventual closure in 1924, the residents of Coranderrk were moved to the Lake Tyers Aboriginal Reserve in Gippsland, but many began moving to Melbourne where they continued to campaign for justice and recognition through new avenues, such as the Aborigines Advancement League.

The *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* enabled the recognition of Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs). WWCHAC became a RAP in 2008, one of the earliest under the inaugural *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*. DDWCAC's Recognition and Settlement Agreement, the first of its kind in Victoria, was settled with the Victorian Government in 2013 after 18 months of negotiations. A Recognition and Settlement Agreement for TLWCAC commenced in 2020, following two years of legal challenges from the time it was signed in 2018, and twenty years of struggle.

2.3 Exploring, surveying and mapping

Exploring

By the early nineteenth century, the British colonial settlements in both the colony of **New South Wales and in Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) had expanded dramatically and** settlers and governments alike concentrated their efforts on finding new land. Various exploratory expeditions were mounted to explore the area south of the Murray River. The first of these was led by Hamilton Hume and William Hovell in 1824. During their expedition from New South Wales to Western Port in the Port Phillip District they sighted Mount Macedon and named it Mount Wentworth after explorer William Charles Wentworth.

In 1836, in an effort to find agricultural land suitable for establishing a permanent farming population in the Riverina area of NSW, the Governor of New South Wales Sir Richard Bourke instructed Surveyor-General Thomas Mitchell to finish tracing the course of the Darling River to the Murray River, to survey the Murray to its junction with the Murrumbidgee, and then to follow the southern bank of the Murray back to the settled parts of New South Wales. Major Mitchell, with a party of 25 men, several Aboriginal guides, and provisions for a five-month journey, set off from central western New South

Wales in March 1836. After crossing the Murray River near present-day Boundary Bend, Mitchell ignored official instructions and instead explored the northern, western and **central regions of Victoria, a region he named 'Australia Felix'.**

On his return journey to Sydney, Mitchell occupied a base camp near present-day Faraday from 30 September to 2 October 1836. On 30 September, while waiting for the **expedition's** boat-carriage to be repaired, Mitchell, with a small party, travelled to a **'lofty mountain' via the districts of today's Malmsbur**y, Kyneton and Woodend. En route, Mitchell named the Barnard River, which was later renamed the Coliban River, and the Campaspe River, the latter named after a mistress of Alexander the Great. From the top of this mountain Mitchell was able to view Port Phillip Bay. In acknowledgement of this view, he named the mountain Mount Macedon after Philip II, the ruler of Macedonia (359–336BC), although, he noted, he much preferred the Aboriginal name Geboor, which he learnt later. He also erected a stone cairn on the summit (Garran 1892). The party camped at the foot of the mountain and returned to the main camp on 1 October. The **expedition broke camp on 3 October and travelled west towards today's Redesdale** (Mitchell 1839; DCE 1990:103–105).

In 1855, Wilhelm (William) Blandowski, appointed as the first officer to the Museum of Natural History in Melbourne, visited the Mount Macedon area and published his observations of the environs of Mount Macedon in the *Transactions of the Philosophical Society of Victoria* (Blandowski 1855).

Other exploratory expeditions that passed through the area of Macedon Ranges Shire include the ill-fated Victorian Exploration Expedition led by Robert **O'Hara** Burke, en route to the Gulf of Carpentaria in 1860. After leaving Melbourne, the expedition passed **through the Shire, camping at Captain Robert Gardiner's 'Bolinda Vale' station on 22 August and William Henry Dunsford's 'Lancefield' station on 23 August** (Woodhouse 2020:2). Part of the route is now known as the Burke and Wills Track and markers throughout the district commemorate the expedition.

Figure 2.1 View of the Campaspe River, painted by Alfred H Vickers, 1854. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H87.35/5)

Surveying for settlement

The formal response to settlement, by survey, came several decades after the informal squatting on pastoral lands in Macedon Ranges. In opening up the Port Phillip District, surveyors were responsible for how farmland and townships were laid out for sale, including the retention and reservation of Crown land for public purposes. In 1848, an Order-in-Council enabled land to be allocated for towns and villages, Aboriginal reserves, water reserves, inns, mineral reserves and timber reserves. Town surveys followed and public land was reserved within the town layout for schools, halls, police stations, court houses, churches, cemeteries, post offices, parks and gardens, and recreation grounds. Cemeteries were generally located a few miles from a town and places of residence.

In 1843, the government surveyor for Port Phillip, Robert Hoddle, mapped the Macedon region as part of setting the boundaries for the new County of Bourke. As part of the survey, Hoddle **named Hanging Rock as 'Diogenes Mount'** (McConville 2017:53). It was **also known locally at the time as Dryden's Rock and Dryden's Monument as it was** located on Edward **Dryden's** Newham run (Boxshall 2017:52; McConville 2017:56).

In 1845, William Swan Urquhart commenced as an assistant surveyor under Hoddle. One of Urquhart's first duties was the survey of the boundaries of the counties of Bourke and Grant between Mount Macedon and Mount Blackwood. In 1851, Urquhart surveyed 31,000 acres of William Clarke's land near Sunbury, known as Clarke's Special Survey, and marked sites for townships and building allotments at Woodend, Carlsruhe and Malmsbury. In 1852, he surveyed a large portion of the road from Melbourne to the Mount Alexander goldfields, known as the Mount Alexander Road, and a road over Mount Macedon (James 2009).

From 1852, as part of the Geological Survey of Victoria, surveyor Alfred Selwyn produced a set of geological maps, including of the region around Hanging Rock in which he emphasised 'the differences in geological formation between the rocks and soils to the north and south of the Great Dividing Range' (McConville 2017:56). Surveys carried out in the Macedon Ranges district originated from a point on the summit of Mount Macedon where a stone pillar forms a trigonometric cairn survey marker erected in 1853, which survives today. This was described in the *Argus* on 28 December 1871 as

> a great central landmark, visible over the extent of the colony form[ing] a very important trig station, a fact which is still evidenced by the substantial stone pillar some 20 feet high, which with its surrounding framework of timber (cited by Macedon and Mount Macedon Tourism Association 2022).

2.4 Adapting to diverse environments

The physical environment of the Macedon Ranges Shire presented settlers with a range of difficulties, including densely timbered forests and relatively cold temperatures, including occasional snowfalls. This necessitated novel developments.

The steep terrain of Mount Macedon presented challenges for timber-cutters in the 1850s. The operators of Robert Barbour's Black Forest sawmill constructed a tramway and log chute from the top of Mount Macedon as a way of getting the logs to the mill below. (VHR H2022).

2.5 Migrating and making a home

The first immigrants to settle in the Macedon Ranges Shire were pastoral settlers, known as squatters, and their servants. The squatters were mostly of English or Scottish background, with the financial means and business acumen to purchase livestock and to operate extensive and relatively remote pastoral runs.

The goldrushes of the 1850s brought large numbers of immigrants to the acedon Ranges Shire. While predominantly from Great Britain and Ireland, there were also large

numbers of immigrants from China, continental Europe, and North America. The early sales of farming land in the area attracted those who sought to settler as farmers.

The Chinese

As part of broader migration patterns associated with the gold rush, there were a number of Chinese (almost exclusively male) who settled in the Macedon Ranges Shire. The Chinese had arrived in central Victoria from 1852, in part driven out by conflict in Southern China, mostly from Guangdong Province. A number of Chinese people were attracted to the goldfields of Malmsbury and Lauriston. There were permanent Chinese populations at Malmsbury, Lauriston and Kyneton, and Chinese market gardens were operating in these towns from the 1870s. While the Chinese took up other occupations, mining and gardening were their main areas of work (Walter 2010:8). There were also Chinese market gardeners living on the north bank of Five Mile Creek (Woodend) and **James Koochew opened a greengrocer's shop in Macedon in the 1900s (Boxshall** 2017:94). Garden Hut Creek between Lancefield and Woodend is thought to be the site of a Chinese market garden (Stakeholder consultation, 2022). In the first decades of the twentieth century the Kim family lived in Malmsbury where William Kim worked as a market gardener and vegetable hawker (Chinese-Australian Historical Images in Australia 2013). Low-lying land in Cameron Street, Malmsbury, was used by local Chinese residents as a market garden for at least thirty years. Comprising a creek gully fed by runoff from the racecourse and surrounding areas, it was an ideal site. After the Chinese departed it was used by other local residents as a market garden well into the 1950s (Walter 2010:100).

The Irish

The acquisition in 1841 of a **'special survey'** at Kilmore, southeast of the Macedon Ranges Shire, by Irishman William Rutledge influenced broader Irish settlement patterns in the district. In 1841 Rutledge had encouraged Irish immigrants to Kilmore to work as tenant farmers on his estate and had reputedly provided them with tools (Rutledge 1965; Buckley 1983:8). Many Irish immigrants with farming backgrounds were attracted to the area and many prospered. The land selection acts in the 1860s enabled many Irish to take up land and establish small farms. Strong Irish communities emerged in the agricultural areas of Lancefield, Trentham East, and Bullengarook, where the noted **Gaelic scholar and committed Irish nationalist Nicholas O'Donnell was born in 1861** (McConville 1988). Lancefield fielded an Irish hurling team in the 1880s, and the annual **St Patrick's Day race meetings held at Kyneton and Lancefield drew large crowds.**

The Scots

Owing to the labour shortage caused by the goldrush, a number of pastoralists sponsored assisted immigrants to work on their runs. A number of Scots who settled around the Woodend and Newham areas had arrived in Melbourne as assisted immigrants on the *Priscilla* in February 1853. Both the *Priscilla* and an earlier immigrant ship, the *Georgiana*, which had docked in Geelong in 1852, were sponsored by the Highland and Island Emigration Society. This organisation funded and organised the emigration of the poor from the Highlands and Islands of Scotland Many of these immigrants found immediate employment with pastoralists and others upon their arrival (McFadzean 2013). Assisted immigrants were required to engage in a contract of employment for a set period of time, usually two years.

Strong Scottish communities formed in many of the early townships of the Shire. The region around Newham, Woodend and Kyneton was a popular focus for Scottish settlement from the mid-nineteenth century and the Newham Presbyterian Church conducted services in Scottish Gaelic for several decades. From the 1850s, Newham was known variously as Hieland Town or Isle of Skye, reflecting the strong Scottish heritage of the early settlers (McFadzean 2013). St **Andrew's** Presbyterian Church in Kyneton also **conducted occasional services in Gaelic (St Andrew's Church 1932). Hig**hland games were also popular in the Shire, for example in the Newham district, where early sport meetings included tossing the caber, hammer throwing, foot races and bagpipe playing (G&MMDHS 2012:25). Many of the large houses built at Mount Macedon were given Scottish names**—for example, 'Ard Choille', 'Ard Rudah', 'Glenrannoch' and 'Duneira'—** reflecting the Scottish heritage of their owners.

2.6 Promoting settlement

Pastoralism

An Order-in-Council of 1847 that enabled pastoral license holders to acquire a 640-acre homestead block encouraged permanent pastoral settlers. This was important to the development of the pastoral industry, which would provide employment for large numbers of people and contribute significantly to exports.

Land sales

From the early 1850s, large areas of the Shire (excluding the heavily forested areas) were sold as country lots at Crown land sales. Much of the district therefore was held as freehold land before the introduction of the selection acts in the 1860s, which enabled smallholders to acquire farming land. Between 1850 and 1857, for instance, the parishes of Carlsruhe, Tylden and Lauriston were subdivided and sold in blocks ranging between

20 and 500 acres (Bick 1990:259). Allotments at Mount Macedon were sold at land sales held from 1854, and from 1855 the sale of blocks of land in the Lancefield and Romsey district were conducted in Kilmore (Burns 2002:12; Woodhouse 2020:2).

Land selection

During the nineteenth century and up until the 1950s, settlement policies were directed by government intervention and underpinned by the assumption that the expansion of settlement and agriculture was essential if Victoria, and the nation, were to prosper.

With the waning of alluvial gold by the late 1850s, there were growing calls to '**unlock** the **land'. Many pointed to the inequity of large tracts of country being held by a select** number of people and drew on the popular ideology of the yeoman farmer to argue for small holders to take up land. As a result, a series of land acts in Victoria were passed from 1860 that enabled agricultural settlement (Wright 1989: xiii; Dingle 1984).

In an effort to break the hold of the squatters, the Victorian land acts of 1860, 1862, 1865 and 1869 provided for the sale of Crown lands and for the occupation of land for a variety of agricultural and pastoral purposes. Applicants were able to select land and apply for permission to occupy the land under the provisions of a variety of leases and licences, many of which subsequently afforded a right of purchase.

Section 42 of the 1865 Act allowed subdivision of land into small allotments around goldfields, and as a consequence land around Lauriston was occupied under this provision (Bick 1990:208). In addition, land in Mount Macedon was made available in 20-acre blocks after Mount Macedon had been declared a goldfield in 1868 (*Weekly Times*, 3 June 1899:18).

The majority of land in the Shire not already in private hands by the late 1860s was opened up for selection under the *Land Act* of 1869, which allowed the selection of up to 320 acres before survey, through an initial licence and leasehold arrangement. An 1878 amendment doubled the licence and lease terms to six and 14 years respectively.

Under the 1869 act, parts of the Macedon State Forest and an area of Riddells Creek were made available for selection in 1879 (*Kyneton Guardian*, 19 Dec 1877:2; *Age*, 8 May 1879:3). At Macedon, 12,000 acres of State Forest were opened for the selection of residential sites of up to 20 acres. In addition, farms of between 80 and 300 acres were made available in the forest under the same act (*Age*, 8 May 1879:3). Even though the **greater portion of the land was viewed as 'quite unfit for either pastoral or agricultural purposes', the farm sites were rushed by selectors**, but little interest was shown in the residential blocks (*Geelong Advertiser*, 12 May 1879:2).

Closer settlement

With the cancellation of pastoral leases in 1870, some of the largest freeholds that had been established as pastoral stations were privately subdivided over the following decades. In 1886, for instance, all of 'Cheveley' and 2000 acres at 'Barfold' were sold in smaller lots (Bick 1990:262).

Closer settlement policies were pursued by consecutive Victorian governments from the 1890s into the twentieth century as critical for the progress of the colony and the State. During the economic depression of the 1890s, employing people on unused or under-used rural land was seen as a way of ameliorating unemployment and addressing overcrowding in the city. Villages that intended to become self-sufficient and based on co-operative enterprise were established under the *Village Settlement Act 1892* in rural, forested, and irrigated areas. In addition, under the *Settlement of Land Act 1893*, families were given cash advances by the Victorian government to take up cultivation of dryland and irrigated allotments of between one and 50 acres. These acts established village communities, labour colonies and homestead associations in areas where seasonal work was available to supplement farm work. Most of these settlements failed because of the selected land was unsuitable for farming and the allotments were too small.

A number of village and homestead settlements were established in the Shire in 1893, including the Newham Village Settlement on the northern slope of Mount Macedon, and the O'Loghlen and Bent village settlements at Macedon (the Macedon Village Settlement). The Macedon Village Settlement State School No. 3259 opened in 1896 to cater for the children of the settlers but closed in 1918 (Blake 1973:835). In addition, an area of 11,700 acres of the Wombat State Forest was subdivided into allotments for agricultural, village and homestead settlements (*Argus*, 26 March 1897:3; RC 1899:3).

Soldier settlement

Towards the end of, and in the wake of, the First World War, discharged soldier settlement acts were passed in the period 1917–24 in conjunction with the Closer Settlement Acts of 1915, 1918 and 1922. These formed the legislative basis for soldier settlement in Victoria. Seen as repaying the 'debt of honour', soldier settlement schemes enjoyed widespread public and political support. Some soldier settlement took place in the Parishes of Gisborne and Macedon, with part of the Mount Aitken estate subdivided in 1923 (PROV 2015; Butler 2009:24). Soldier settlers also took up land near the township of Romsey in 1918 (*Romsey Examiner*, 6 Dec 1918:2), and at Lauriston, Edgecombe and Springfield (Stakeholder consultation, 2022).

For the most part, closer settlement as an active government policy was wound down from 1938, however another phase of soldier settlement was introduced following World War II when soldier settlement was facilitated with the assistance of Returned Servicemen's Leagues (RSLs). Because of the provision of larger blocks and more

intensive support and training for prospective soldier settlers, this scheme was more **successful than that which followed World War I. Blocks on Cameron's Land in** the Romsey district were made available to soldier settlers in 1947 (*Argus*, 10 Jan 1947: 3). **Two properties in Kyneton, 'Coliban Downs' and 'Ripper's', were also provided for soldier** settlement blocks (Smallwood 1992: 243, 246). Other land was acquired for soldier settlement in the Riddells Creek district, with most of the blocks used for dairying (Goss 1983: 58).

The population of Macedon Ranges Shire grew slowly during the 1950s and 1960s, but the growth rate increased markedly from 1971 as more people commuted to Melbourne for work (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2: 2). From the 1990s, population growth occurred at a faster rate, with the greatest growth in the towns of Gisborne, Riddells Creek and Romsey. These were the townships closest to Melbourne and, as such, had a high proportion of city commuters (idcommunity 2022).

3 Connecting Macedon Ranges Shire by transport and communications

3. Connecting Macedon Ranges Shire by transport and communications

Transport and communication networks have played an important role in connecting the residents of Macedon Ranges Shire both within their own locality and to the wider world. The Shire is intersected by two major transport corridors: the road to the Castlemaine and Bendigo goldfields (now the Calder Freeway), and the Melbourne and Mildura railway line. Most of the centres of population in the Shire were located along these routes, and these became commutable from Melbourne with the opening of the Tullamarine Freeway in 1970. In addition, services provided by mail runs, post and telegraph offices, and the telephone have played a vital part in connecting people in the Shire.

3.1 Establishing transport routes

The first pathways in Macedon Ranges Shire were made by Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung peoples travelling to meeting places for trade and ceremony and moving through Country to access food and water. Early European routes often followed these pathways.

Tracks and roads

On his 1836 expedition through central and western Victoria, it is likely that Thomas Mitchell, Surveyor-General of New South Wales, followed long-established paths of the Kulin people as he employed several Aboriginal guides for the journey. The wheel ruts left behind by Mitchell's expedition were known as the Major's Line. This visible track, which crossed through the districts of today's Malmsbury, Kyneton and Woodend, was followed by overlanders seeking land. Overlanders from New South Wales, driving their stock to the Port Phillip District, also formed new tracks.

Lieutenant Charles Joseph La Trobe subsequently established a number of services along these tracks, including postal routes, camping grounds to provide water and rest for teamsters, Border and Mounted Police barracks, and roadside inns (Bick 1990:225). In the Macedon Ranges Shire, these services were provided along the roads to Mount Macedon, Loddon, and Lancefield, and often formed the nucleus of later settlements.

Melbourne–Bendigo Road

Tracks between Melbourne and the northern areas of the colony of Victoria were formed from the mid-1830s by pastoralists droving livestock and transporting wool, tallow and hides to markets in Melbourne and to the River Murray paddle steamer trade.

A track formed northwest from Melbourne in the 1830s was known as the Mount Macedon Road, and from Mount Macedon, the Loddon Road. This linked the squatting runs of the Loddon and Campaspe Rivers and Murray River to Melbourne (Moloney 2014:63). The track is shown on an 1849 map as a formed road leading from Melbourne to the northwest to Deep Creek at Bulla. From here the road turned into a track, which travelled across Five Mile Creek (Woodend) northwest of Mount Macedon, to Carlsruhe Inn and camping ground from where the track forked. The west fork led to a crossing over the Campaspe River at a camping ground sited at today's Kyneton and on to Mount Alexander, from where the track headed northwest to the Serpentine Creek and on to Swan Hill. The east fork from Carlsruhe led to Deep Creek (later Lancefield) (Ham 1849). Wedge's Flat, the current site of Kyneton, was a post station on the Loddon Road in 1843, and a teamsters' camping reserve was gazetted in the same place in 1845 (Bick 1990:6).

From 1851, gold-seekers on the way to the Forest Creek (Mount Alexander) diggings followed the track from Melbourne, by then known as the Mount Alexander Road, forming several interrelated tracks, which then extended to the Bendigo goldfield. Much of the track was surveyed by surveyor William Swan Urquhart in 1852. Engineer Edward Richardson, in a paper to the Victorian Institute for the Advancement of Science in 1855, declared that 'in the period 1852–53 the traffic on the Mount Alexander Road had "exceeded that of any road in England"' (cited in Moloney 2014:65). A number of toll gates were opened on the road in the 1850s.

One of the worst sections of the road was through the Black Forest, which stretched from today's Gisborne to Woodend. Woodend was named literally, as, travelling north, it marked the end of the dreaded forest. The Black Forest was notorious for the poor state of the road through the bush, which was described by Lord Robert Cecil in 1852 as a 'mere pathway…a foot deep in dust and pitted with holes…[and] dotted with stumps half buried'. At times it was 'so narrow that…both wheels grazed trees on each side' (*Age*, 25 Jan 1938:14). The Black Forest was frequented by bushrangers, including the nefarious Black Douglas. Consequently, diggers were well-armed and travelled together for protection. In 1852, in James Arnot's party of 34, for example, he and three friends carried two brace of pistols, a rifle, a ball gun, a bowie knife and a 'life preserver' (Moloney 2014:67).

Figure 3.1 'Road in the Black Forest' by S T Gill, 1854. (Source: Public Record Office Victoria)

Private coach companies, such as Cobb & Co, cut clearer, deeper tracks between Melbourne and the goldfields. Other traffic along the Mount Alexander Road in 1852, described by one traveller, comprised perambulators, bush sledges, spring carts, a London cab, and horse and bullock drays. It also included the gold escort, which, by April 1852 was transporting half a ton of gold to Melbourne each week (Moloney 2014: 68). Gold from the diggings was transported to Melbourne via the Mount Alexander Road by an armed escort, first privately owned, but later operated by the military and police.

In 1853 the newly formed Central Roads Board allocated most of its budget to the Mount Alexander Road, making some slight deviations to its route (Bick 1990: 228). Over the **next four years, 23 timber bridges and five kilometres of 'plank road' (corduroy road)** were constructed (Moloney 2014: 70).

Figure 3.2 Road-making in the Black Forest near Mount Macedon in 1853, painted by T G Taylor, showing a section of the road being built, with tents and a shelter of wood and canvas in the **foreground with a sign 'Coffee' and another sign that reads 'The Diggers' Rest/**Refreshments & **Stores/by Bill Smigs VDL'. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H2007.70/1)**

By 1857, 57 miles of the road had been completed and 25 miles had been formed and partially metalled at a cost of £656,979 (*Bendigo Advertiser*, 14 Feb 1857:2). In 1858 toll gates were opened on the road north of Mount Macedon, and at Boggy Creek, Carlsruhe, Gisborne, Woodend (Bick 1990:231, 247; Boxshall 2017:103).

Traffic on the road effectively ceased after the railway line reached Bendigo in 1862. With a significant reduction in road traffic, inns closed, police barracks were downgraded and closed, and in 1864, wayside gold escort stations were sold. In 1862 Cobb & Co discontinued its Bendigo service and moved its headquarters from Melbourne to Bathurst. Traffic on the Mount Alexander Road was significantly reduced by the end of the nineteenth century, in marked contrast to the busy period of the 1850s and 1860s (Moloney 2014:70).

By the late 1830s, camping grounds for stock and drovers had been established at Deep Creek, near **today's** Lancefield, and Five Mile Creek (at Romsey). From 1853, the droving track was extended by gold seekers heading to the diggings at McIvor (Heathcote).

Another track, north of Five Mile (Woodend) that led to Lancefield and Pyalong and on to the McIvor diggings, was also used by gold seekers at this time.

Elsewhere, under the direction of the Lancefield Roads Board, formed in 1860, a road was constructed from Monegeetta Junction to Lancefield Junction (Clarkefield) railway station (Reid 1992:49).

Bullengarook cutting

The Bullengarook cutting was in use by 1866 as a travelling route linking traffic from Bacchus Marsh to Gisborne and Macedon, and also more broadly from Port Phillip to the Blackwood and Bendigo goldfields and into the Wombat State Forest for timber.

Transport services

By 1852, private coach companies, such as Cobb & Co, were operating between Melbourne and the Bendigo and Forest Creek goldfields. Cobb & Co's light, leather-sprung coaches, tested during the Californian gold-rush, were ideal for the primitive roads. The company introduced short stages, with change stations every ten miles at hotels at Essendon, Keilor, The Gap, Gisborne, Woodend, Carlsruhe, Kyneton, Malmsbury and Elphinstone, before reaching Castlemaine (Blake 1971:20; Moloney 2014:68).

Local transport services were also established. Charles Cogger, for example, purchased land at Mount Macedon in 1865 on which he established an orchard of five acres. When transporting his fruit to the Macedon railway station he was often asked for a ride to the station. He subsequently established a transport service, purchasing a variety of drays, cabs, wagons, wagonettes and buggies. After two of the Cogger sons took over the business it became known as Cogger Bros. In 1945, Cogger Bros sold to Ponsford and Garner. Charles Cogger junior's house was later used as the gardener's cottage belonging to 'Camelot', Mount Macedon. Similarly, Thomas Dunn also established a transport business at Mount Macedon and was responsible for the mail run between the railway station and the post office (Milbourne 1978:78).

Figure 3.3 The Mount Macedon Road, Mount Macedon, photographed by Nicholas **O'Donnell in** 1913. (Source: Museums Victoria, item MM 4395)

Bridges and crossings

Timber bridges were erected on the road to the Loddon District in 1849 at Five Mile Creek (Woodend) and over the Coliban River (Bick 1990:225). A single-span bluestone bridge built across Five Mile Creek at Woodend in 1862 is in evidence today (Barned 1985:7). Elsewhere, farmers frustrated by crossing difficulties at the old ford upstream near Baynton Street in Kyneton built their own temporary structure in 1855 (Bick 1990:231). Nineteenth-century bridging techniques can be seen at the bridge on Whitebridge Road, Cobaw, which has timber decking with rolled steel girders and masonry abutments (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2:8).

New technology using concrete led to the development of concrete bridges. Engineer John Monash and the Monier company, were pivotal in concrete bridge construction from the late 1890s. A number of Monier bridges exist in the Shire: examples are Darraweit Bridge (1914) in Darraweit Guim; Donovan's Bridge (1934) in Chintin; Emu Creek Bridge (c1910) in Clarkefield; and Holden Bridge (1909) in Riddells Creek (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2:8; Vol 4:62, 168, 427, 624).

Other bridges were built privately. Ashbourne residents Bert Wakefield and Phillip Dean, for example, built a bridge over the Campaspe River in Chambers Road in 1954 using two Bren gun carriers as the base for the bridge (Holth 2014:65).

Figure 3.4 The Five Mile Creek bridge at **Woodend**, built in the 1860s, photographed by John **T** Collins in 1963. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H2010.1/3013)

Inns and hotels

Travellers along the northwest road from Melbourne to Mount Alexander, and beyond to the Loddon district, were catered for by a number of wayside inns, coffee-houses and camping reserves. Wayside inns were often built near a water source and generally provided stables for coach staging. A smithy was also often provided for the repair of drays and for shoeing the horses (Moloney 2014:69). Early structures were often a slab and canvas construction. The Bush Inn (later the site of Gisborne) operated from 1840, and in 1841 the Glen Dhu Inn opened near where the track crossed Five Mile Creek (Woodend) (Barned 1985:9). The Carlsruhe Inn was in operation by 1844 (*Port Phillip Gazette*, 27 April 1844:2) and a hotel built in the Gisborne area in 1847 (now Macedon House) (VHD 14047, VHR H2085).

Figure 3.5 Henry **Godrey, sketch titled 'Bush Inn, 35 [miles] from Town, Mount Macedon Road',** dated 1848. (Source: State Library Victoria)

With the sudden rush to the gold diggings at Forest Creek (Mount Alexander) and Bendigo in the early 1850s, the demand for accommodation at the wayside inns well exceeded what was available, and new inns were quickly established. At Middle Creek **(Macedon), for example, English's Inn opened to serve gold seekers on the Mount** Alexander Road (Burns 2002:13). As well as licensed hotels, canvas and stringybark sly-grog shanties **(called 'coffee tents')** lined the route. Respectable travellers avoided these **places, which were often 'turned into a place of riotous festivity by returning diggers …** **heralded by miles of bottles' (Moloney 2014:69). By** 1855, many of the hotels had been rebuilt as more substantial, double-storey stone buildings.

Elsewhere, inns were established on the road to the McIvor diggings (Heathcote), including the Drovers and Carriers Arms c1857; this building is still in evidence today, north of Five Mile Creek at Romsey (Woodhouse 2020:68). The Old Telegraph Inn opened in the late 1850s at Ashbourne on the route from Lower Macedon to the **Blackwood diggings (Holth 2014:6). McGrane's Commercial Hotel opened in 1866 in Orr** Street, Malmsbury, at the junction of the road to Daylesford, where it also functioned as a coach stop. By 1865, there were 15 hotels in Kyneton (Whitworth 1865), and by 1867, 17 hotels had been opened in Malmsbury to serve the traffic to and from the diggings (Stevens 1987:55–57). After 1862, with the railway line completed, the condition of many of the hotels declined.

The temperance movement had worked for many years campaigning against the large number of hotels and the adverse social impacts associated with alcoholism. A temperance hotel opened in Kyneton in the 1880s to provide an alternative place of refreshment. As a result of the work of the Licences Reduction Board, a large number of hotels across Victoria were closed in the early twentieth century (Moloney 2014: 70). This included many in the Macedon Ranges Shire. An exception was the Clarkefield Hotel, which had been built near the Clarkefield railway station in 1873.

Other hotels built in the townships from the 1870s included the Post Office Hotel in Romsey and the two-storey Junction Hotel in Malmsbury, built in 1872; the Junction **Hotel was later used for accommodation under the name 'Residential Mansion' (SLV** Accession No. H90.140/648). The former Royal Mail Hotel building in Romsey is also an important early building. It housed the first meetings of the Lancefield Roads Board from 1864, at which time the hotel was known as the Drovers and Carriers Arms (Woodhouse 2020: 84).

THE ROSE SERIES P. 4994   RESIDENTIAL MANSIONS, MALMSBURY, VIC.

Figure 3.6 **The Junction Hotel in Malmsbury, later renamed the 'Residential Mansion'. (Source:** State Library Victoria, Accession No. H90.140/648)

In the prosperous years of the 1880s and again in the early twentieth century, hotels continued to be built. A notable example is the speculative three-storey Macedonia Hotel at Lancefield that boasted 52 rooms, which was built in anticipation of a tourist boom in 1889 (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 Feb 2004).

Figure 3.7 The 52-roomed Macedonia Hotel, Lancefield, ~~built~~ in 1889. (Source: State Library Victoria, Record ID 9939659197107636)

3.2 Linking Macedon Ranges by rail

A number of railway lines have been built through Macedon Ranges Shire, facilitating the movement of passengers and the transport of goods including farm produce, and timber.

Main railway lines

Melbourne and Murray River railway

The Surveyor-General of Victoria Captain Andrew Clarke was authorised to undertake surveys for railway construction throughout the central parts of the colony in the mid-1850s. By the end of 1855, 16 survey parties had completed surveys for new lines, including the Main Trunk Lines from Geelong to Ballarat, which was opened in 1862, and from Melbourne to the Murray River at Echuca, which was opened in 1864.

Opened in five stages from 10 February 1859 to 19 September 1864, the railway to Echuca, officially referred to as the Melbourne, Mount Alexander and Murray River Railway, and later, during construction, as the Melbourne and Murray River Railway, was

the largest of the colony's first two trunk lines. It was built chiefly to capture the Murray River and Riverina paddle-steamer trade for the Port of Melbourne. It was constructed under the supervision of Victorian Railways Department Engineers-in-Chief George Darbyshire (1859–60) and Thomas Higinbotham (1860–1878 and 1880). Its major contractors were Messrs Cornish and Bruce (Ward 1988:49). The Melbourne–Echuca rail route is one of the most important nineteenth-century transport routes in Victoria.

The Melbourne–Bendigo section of the Melbourne and Murray River railway line was built in close alignment to the Mount Alexander and Bendigo roads. Sections opened through the area in the period 1861-62 as follows: Sunbury to Woodend in July 1861; Woodend to Kyneton in April 1862; and Kyneton to Castlemaine in October 1862. The line passed just north of Gisborne to create the new township of New Gisborne. Large camps were established along the line to accommodate railway workers; and shops, inns and **boarding houses were soon established to cater for workers' needs.**

A workcamp for railway workers and their families was established at Riddells Creek. This was the location of the main depot for the bluestone ballast required for the railway line where stone was extracted and broken up for ballast (*Geelong Advertiser*, 3 July 1861:3). A nearby quarry also provided granite for the ballasting on the line (*Age*, 25 July 1861:7). Other railway camps were occupied at Middle Gully (Macedon) and the Black Forest until 1861 (Burns 2002:13). Another settlement was established at the quarries in Woodend, which were opened to supply gravel for the railway line. A hotel was established here to cater for the workers (Barned 1985:133). Some railway workers took up residence in these areas after the camps closed.

Moving in a northerly direction along the railway line from Melbourne towards Bendigo, railway station buildings were erected in the Shire at Lancefield Road (later Lancefield Junction, and later Clarkefield), Riddells Creek, Gisborne, Middle Gully (Macedon), **Woodend, Carlsruhe, Kyneton and Malmsbury. Woodend's station buildings, erected in** 1861, were relocated from Sunbury railway station (Ward 1988:135). The station buildings at Woodend were destroyed by fire in 1897 (Boxshall 2017:130). A timber station opened at Macedon (formerly Middle Gully) in 1912 to cater for tourists visiting Mount Macedon. Riddells Creek Station was rebuilt in 1913 and the original Gisborne Station buildings relocated from Holden in 1861 were replaced with the current station building erected in 1921. A number of the important components of this line fall within the Macedon Ranges Shire, including the railway viaduct over the Coliban River at Malmsbury, which was completed in 1861. Another major structure of the Melbourne and Mildura railway is the arched bridge at Riddells Creek, built of bluestone, which was erected in 1859 (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2:7; Bick 1990:249).

Branch lines

Lancefield Road (Clarkefield) branch line

A railway station opened at Lancefield Road on the Melbourne and Murray River railway line in 1861. When a branch line from Lancefield Road to Lancefield via Romsey opened in 1881, the name of the railway station was changed to Lancefield Junction. In 1926, the **station's** name was changed to Clarkefield (*Victorian Places* 2015). An extension from Lancefield to Kilmore opened in 1892. The construction of the line entailed some major engineering works, including deep cuttings and viaducts. The Lancefield–Kilmore section closed in 1904, with the Clarkefield–Lancefield section closing in 1956 (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2:8). Railway stations within the Shire were built at Bolinda, Monegeetta, Monegeetta North, Romsey, Lancefield and Mount William.

Figure 3.8 Bolinda Creek Viaduct, built in the early 1880s. (National Trust of Australia (Vic) Register, B3033)

Daylesford branch line

The Daylesford to Carlsruhe railway was constructed in 1879–80, following lobbying by local potato growers, barley farmers and sawmillers for a branch line to transport their produce to market. Railway stations within the Shire included Tylden and Fern Hill (Bick 1990:260). The line was closed in 1978.

Redesdale branch line

A branch line from Redesdale Junction at Boggy Creek, north of Kyneton, to Redesdale, opened in 1891 with stops at Edgecombe, Degraves, Emberton and Green Hill (Bick 1990:262). This line was closed in 1954.

3.3 Linking Macedon Ranges by road in the twentieth century

Improving country roads

The Country Roads Board (CRB) was established in 1913 as the central road authority in Victoria, through the provisions of the *Country Roads Act 1912*, with responsibility for those roads within the State considered to be main roads. Coinciding with the increasing popularity of the motor car, a program of road building and upgrades was undertaken in Victoria.

Several roads in Macedon Ranges Shire were subsequently declared main roads, including the Melbourne–Lancefield Road, the Lancefield–Kilmore Road and the Woodend–Lancefield Road, followed by the Lancefield–Tooborac Road and the Gisborne–Kilmore Road (Reid 1992:52).

In 1925, the Melbourne to Bendigo Road, which was part of the North West Road that connected Melbourne to Bendigo and Mildura via Sea Lake and Charlton, became a part of the newly declared state highway, the North-West Highway (*Horsham Times*, 7 July 1925:1). In 1928, the highway was renamed the Calder Highway after William Calder (Rands 2019). In 1928, the Great Northern Highway was completed between Melbourne and Woodend (GJM 2022:3).

In 1970 the Tullamarine Freeway was opened, which placed many townships within commuting distance of outer metropolitan Melbourne. In 2005, duplication of the Calder Highway to create four lanes commenced and the road was renamed the Calder Freeway (Rands 2019).

Motor garages and service stations

With the increasing popularity of the motor car in the first decades of the twentieth century, many blacksmiths and wheelwrights converted their businesses to motor garages and service stations. In Romsey, at least three blacksmiths converted their premises to motor garages, including Forbes Garage in Main Street, Romsey (Woodhouse 2020:103).

Williams' garage opened in High Street, Lancefield, in the 1920s, and remained in the same family ownership for three generations until 1989. Jim Mooney opened another garage in Lancefield in the 1920s (Reid 1992: 86).

At the established tourist centre of Woodend, motor garages increased in number from one in 1925 to four in 1930. At least two of these garages, Campaspe Motors Pty Ltd and **G R South's Motor Garage, were located in the town's main street, High Street.** South's Motor Garage, which operated from c1930 to c1954, and an associated house at 59 High Street, Woodend, remain in evidence today (GJM 2022: 3).

Figure 3.9 Detail of a photograph of Woodend, c1930, showing a Shell petrol station with petrol bowsers on the footpath. (Source: State Library Victoria, Record ID 9937678623607636)

3.4 Linking Macedon Ranges by air

The Kyneton Airfield was first established as an agricultural airstrip in the early 1960s to service the needs of crop dusting. Today the airfield is owned by Macedon Ranges Shire Council and is currently operated by Kyneton Aero Club under a service agreement. The airfield has two runways and approximately 35 private hangers located at the airfield, which have lease arrangements with Macedon Ranges Shire Council (MRSC 2022). Riddells Creek Airfield is privately owned and its one sealed main runway of 880 metres and two small grass runways of 440 metres are used mainly for flight training (Airsports Flying).

3.5 Establishing and maintaining communications

Post and telegraph services

Arrangements for postal services were made in the years soon after the settlement of the Macedon Ranges Shire. Mail was delivered and collected on designated routes by government contractors. The first government post offices were often incorporated within existing buildings such as hotels, railway stations or stores. Following the survey of new townships, sites were set aside as post office reserves.

By 1842, an unofficial postal service for local squatters operated on a roster system from Charles Ebden's pastoral station, Carlsruhe. An official weekly postal service from Melbourne to Carlsruhe was commenced after the Mount Macedon Postal District opened a post office at Wedge's homestead, near Kyneton, in 1843. The Macedon District Post Office is believed to have operated from Carlsruhe from 1844 (Boxshall 2017: 77). A mail service to Woodend commenced in 1844. In 1849 the mail cart went as far as Serpentine Creek, from which a horseback service continued to Swan Hill (Bick 1990: 225).

A telegraph office was in existence in Kyneton by 1849, and possibly earlier (Hoddle 1849). A new telegraph office opened on the present post office site in 1858 (Bick 1990: 240). The technology provided employment opportunities for women.

The 1850s gold rush brought an influx of people to Victoria, and a rapid increase in the volume of mail. The first post office at Woodend opened in 1854. Post offices were also opened that year at Kyneton and Woodend (Boxshall 2017: 57, 78–79). The Bush Inn Post Office opened at Gisborne in March 1850 and was renamed Gisborne later that year. (*Phoenix* 2005). The Malmsbury Post Office also opened in 1854 and was initially named Malmsbury, with an 'e', probably due to a clerical error (*VGG*, 21 Nov 1854: 2632).

Other post offices opened at Lancefield (Five Mile Creek) in 1858; Black Forest in 1859 (renamed Macedon in 1870); Riddells Creek in 1859; Newham in 1860; Romsey in 1860; New Gisborne in 1861; Springfield–Woodend North in 1862; and Bullengarook in 1868.

Upper Macedon Post Office opened in 1870 and was renamed Mount Macedon in 1936 (*Phoenix* 2005). A post office was built at Ashbourne in 1899 (Holth 2014: 20).

Figure 3.10 The mail coach passing Mount Macedon, c1850s. (Source: Michael Cannon, *Life in the Country*, 1978)

Some post offices were constructed as landmark buildings; others existed as small agencies that operated from railway stations and general stores. More substantial buildings were constructed to accommodate offices as settlements grew in size. A grand double-storey post office for Kyneton, designed by Peter Kerr of the Public Works Department (PWD), was built in 1870–1871 (NTAV B2733). In Romsey, a new post office was constructed in 1889–1890 to a design by PWD architect Henry Bastow, with additions made in 1900.

In 1901 post and telegraph offices became the responsibility of the new Commonwealth of Australia. In 1905, the Commonwealth Government erected a new post office at Woodend (Boxshall 2017: 57, 78–79).

Post offices have long served as communication hubs for local communities. In 2010, the original bank building and post office at Romsey were combined and remodelled to house the local branch of the Goldfields Library Corporation and the Romsey Neighbourhood House (Woodhouse 2020: 114).

Figure 3.11 Kyneton Post Office, c1897-99. (Source: State Library Victoria)

Figure 3.12 Woodend Post Office, c1905. (Source: National Archives of Australia)

Figure 3.13 Romsey Post Office. (Source: National Archives of Australia)

Figure 3.14 Upper Macedon (Mount Macedon) Post Office. (Source: National Archives of Australia)

Telephone services

In 1901 the Federal Government took over the control of all postal and telephone services, which were managed by the Postmaster-**General's** Department (PMG). In rural areas in the early twentieth century, additional subscribers and telephones were frequently connected to the available single loop (known as a party line).

Telephone services were introduced to Macedon Ranges in the early 1900s, with Kyneton connected to the main Bendigo to Melbourne trunk line in 1904 (*Bendigo Advertiser*, 17 Feb 1904: 4). A telephone line to Romsey from Lancefield Junction was installed in 1906 but did not reach Springfield until 1920 (Sorraghan 2021: 27).

After enough subscribers paid up for a telephone service to an area, a telephone exchange was opened. The first exchanges were often installed in private homes and staffed by women. In 1907, 40 businesspeople in Kyneton became subscribers but were still waiting in 1908 for the establishment of the promised telephone exchange (*Age*, 29 Sept 1908:6).

Trunk telephone services were improved when aerial telephone wires were installed in the 1920s. In Kyneton, for instance, aerial wires were established in 1923 and local lines were placed underground (Bick 1990:278).

Automatic exchanges were trialled in country districts of Victoria in the late 1920s (*Age*, 24 Sept 1928:13). The Lower Macedon telephone exchange was upgraded to an automatic exchange with a new building erected to house the equipment in 1937 (*CAG*, 1 April 1937:607). In 1962, additions were made to the Mount Macedon automatic exchange (*CAG*, 4 Jan 1962:49). A new automatic telephone exchange was built at Kyneton in 1968–69 (*Vic Yearbook* 1971:753).

Printing and distributing newspapers

Local newspapers played an important role in the lives of communities across the Macedon Ranges Shire and were often one of the earliest commercial enterprises established in a township. Two newspapers were established in Kyneton in 1856: the *Kyneton Advertiser* and the *Kyneton Observer*. The printing press that produced the Melbourne *Age* newspaper and, later, the *Kyneton Guardian* is part of the collection of the Kyneton Museum.

The *Lancefield Chronicle & Romsey Advocate* began publication in 1867. The *Woodend Star and Macedon Advocate* was first published in 1888.

Other early local newspapers included the *Gisborne Express & West Bourke Advertiser* 1858–1860; the *Gisborne Express & Riddells Creek Advertiser* 1860–1864; the *West Bourke Chronicle & Agricultural Gazette for Gisborne, Woodend, Bacchus Marsh* 1864; the *Bacchus Marsh Express* (including Gisborne) 1866–1943; the *Gisborne Gazette* 1892–1926; the *Lancefield Mercury*, established in 1872 (as the *Lancefield Examiner and Romsey Advertiser*); the *Romsey Examiner*, established in 1884; and the *Sunbury News* (including Bulla and Melton) 1892–1927.

Newspapers that continue to service the area include the *Midland Express* first begun in 1984, as well as a number of local gazettes such as *GREAT Gisborne Gazette* launched in 2006, and **other** community **newsletters**.

4 Transforming and managing the land and natural resources

4. Transforming and managing the land and natural resources

The land, water and resources of Macedon Ranges Shire have been adapted and transformed since the mid-1830s to support pastoralism, agriculture and viticulture, and extractive industries such as forestry, gold-mining and quarrying. Waterways have also been adapted to supply water storages.

Historically, cropping, supplemented with sheep grazing, has been the main agricultural industry in the Macedon Ranges Shire, and was established from the 1850s on the volcanic plains of the districts of Kyneton, Malmsbury, Romsey, Carlsruhe and Lauriston. Timber harvesting was undertaken in the forested uplands of the Shire, with sawmills opened in the 1860s in the districts of Woodend, Mount Macedon, Romsey, Hesket, Newham, and Ashbourne. Cool climate viticulture, established in the Shire in the 1840s, was developed on the elevated plains and mountain ranges around Lancefield, Gisborne, Romsey, Kyneton, Malmsbury and Springhill and has experienced a resurgence in more recent decades.

4.1 Grazing and raising livestock

Nineteenth-century pastoral development

Land in the Macedon Ranges Shire was taken up by pastoralists from 1836 when British colonists unlawfully expanded their occupation into the Port Phillip area. Initially this was known as 'squatting' as it was outside the bounds of established (and permitted) settlement within the Colony of New South Wales. In an effort to control the expansion of squatting in the Port Phillip District, Governor Richard Bourke introduced the *Crown Lands Occupation Act* in 1836, which prohibited settlers from depasturing stock on land beyond the 'settled districts' unless they were taken up under an annual lease or licence of £10. Pastoral licenses, however, were not granted until July 1838 when the first full-time Commissioner of Crown Lands was appointed.

The first pastoral runs in the Macedon Ranges Shire were mostly taken up by squatters who arrived from Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania). Others came overland from NSW, following Major Mitchell's track of 1836, known as the 'Major's Line'. John Aitken, a sheep breeder and a member of the Port Phillip Association, was one of the first squatters in the area, taking up land in May 1836 at what is today known as Mount Aitken.

The first squatters to settle in the Shire depastured their stock on the fertile flats that fronted rivers and waterways. These early runs were often managed in conjunction with stations held elsewhere. They relied mainly on the rearing and grazing of sheep for the production of wool. Waterways often served the purpose of a sheepwash.
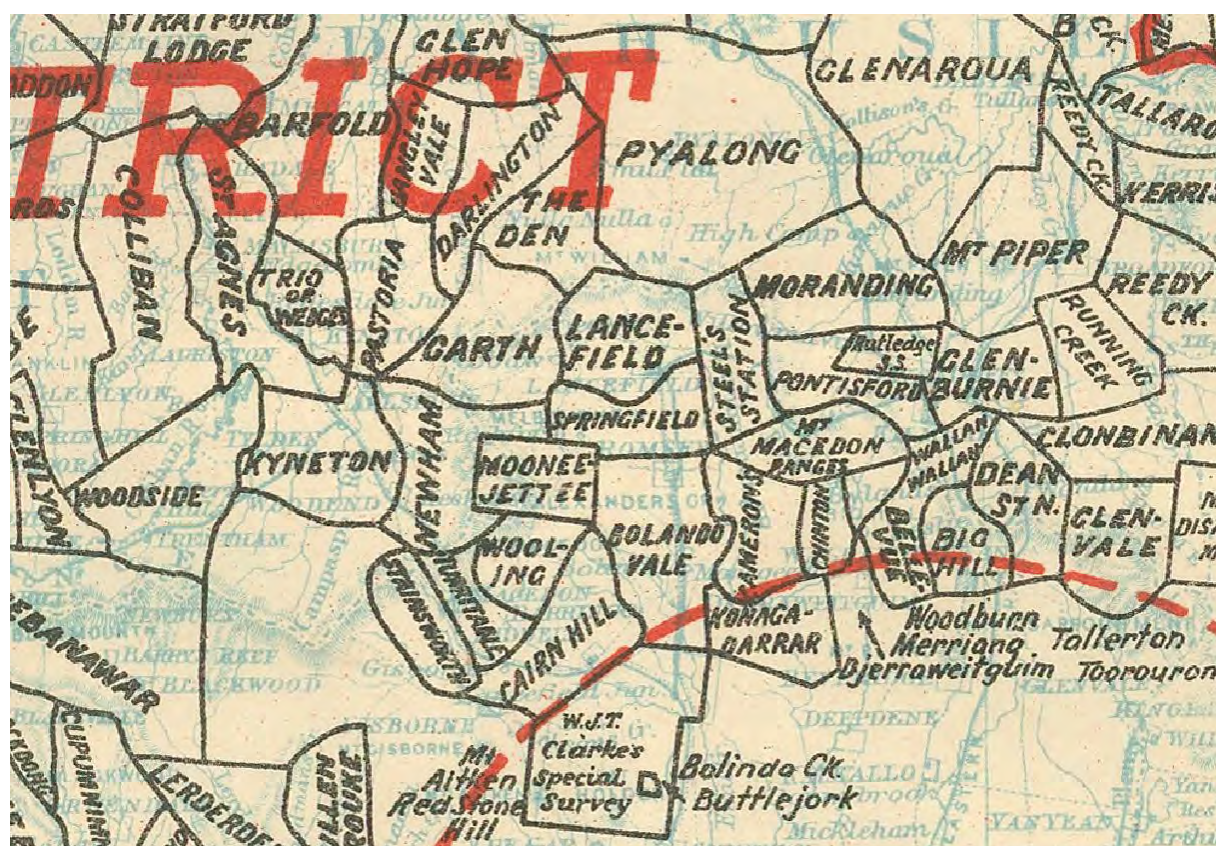
Figure 4.1 A S Kenyon plan of squatting runs in Victoria, 1932. (Source: State Library Victoria)

The earliest pastoral runs in the Macedon Ranges Shire, occupied in 1837-38, included Barfold; Carlsruhe; Colliban; Five Mile Creek (Kyneton)**; and Howey's**.

In February 1837, Henry Howey employed a stockman to drove 4000 sheep and 800 head of cattle from Goulburn in New South Wales to land that incorporated the site of **today's** Gisborne where, in May of that year, he claimed three runs known collectively as Howies **(Howey's)** Station: the head station (on Gisborne Creek); the Red (Redstone) Hill **run; and the Junction run (G&MMDHS 2015:23). Although feted as the 'founder of Gisborne', it is unclear whether Howey was in fact in the area at t**hat time (G&MMDHS 2015:23).

Charles Hotson Ebden, who took up the Carlsruhe run, was at the forefront of the overland pastoral push southwards into the Port Phillip District in the late 1830s. In 1837, in partnership with James Donnithorne, Ebden drove stock from his station on the Murray River in New South Wales, which included about 9000 sheep and 30 horses, as

well as nine drays loaded with stores and equipment. By May of that year, he had settled his stock on land on the Campaspe River west of Mount Macedon, and established a pastoral run he named Carlsruhe (Bick 1990:210; Randell 1979:13). Later in 1837, on behalf of William H Yaldwyn, John Coppock drove stock to the Campaspe River to claim the 'Barfold' run (Randell 1979:13).

In 1838, 'Five Mile Creek' was taken up under pastoral licence by John Thompson, formerly of Hobart. As well as running sheep, he established a dairy farm. In 1841, the Jeffreys Bros purchased the run and renamed it 'Kyneton' after the village of Kington (pronounced 'Kineton') on the Welsh border, which was close to an estate owned by the Jeffreys family (Randell 1982:19).

Figure 4.2 A painting by Edward Jeffreys of the homestead on the Kyneton run, c1850–55. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H8859)

Overlander Alexander Mollison took up the 'Colliban' run on the Coliban River in January 1838, depasturing 5000 sheep, 634 cattle, 28 bullocks, and 22 horses driven from his run on the Murrumbidgee River in New South Wales. On account of the damp soils, Mollison stocked the run mostly with Durham cattle (Serle 1966; Bick 1990:221).

Another extensive squatting run included the 'Darlington' run of 60,000 acres, leased by Sylvester John Brown in 1837, and the 'Lancefield' run of 50,000 acres, leased by W H Dunsford in 1845.

Only basic structures were built during this period because pastoral occupation operated on a leasehold from the Crown. Makeshift huts generally built of readily available materials, including bark, logs, timber slabs, earth or sods, wattle and daub, and stone, provided accommodation for squatters. Rudimentary shearing sheds and sheep washes were also built, as well as huts for pastoral workers. The early boundaries of pastoral runs were established by marked trees or by the features of the landscape. Shepherds controlled the movement of stock from outstation huts using moveable hurdles. The earliest fencing was built to enclose stockyards. The fencing of pastoral properties runs progressed following a ruling about fencing in the 1847 Order-in-Council and continued through the 1850s as freehold properties were consolidated.

An Order-in-Council passed by the New South Wales government in 1847 categorised land as settled, intermediate and unsettled areas, and provided pastoral leases with terms of one, eight and 14 years respectively. Due to the discovery of gold, however, only yearly tenure was approved in the colony of Victoria. Leases were extended to nine years under the 1862 *Land Act* (Vic). The majority of the Macedon Ranges Shire was part of the Western Port squatting district, with some land classified as part of the Settled Districts. Under the Order-in-Council of 1847, squatters who had established improvements on their run, including a homestead, were given the opportunity to acquire **as a 'pre-emptive right' to a 640**-acre homestead block as freehold land. Due to the formal surveying of run boundaries required under the 1847 Order-in-Council and labour shortages, livestock was enclosed in fenced paddocks instead of being run over large areas of land under the watch of shepherds. Following the 1847 Order-in-Council, larger and more elaborate homesteads with substantial outbuildings and expansive gardens were established. Examples include Bolinda Vale.
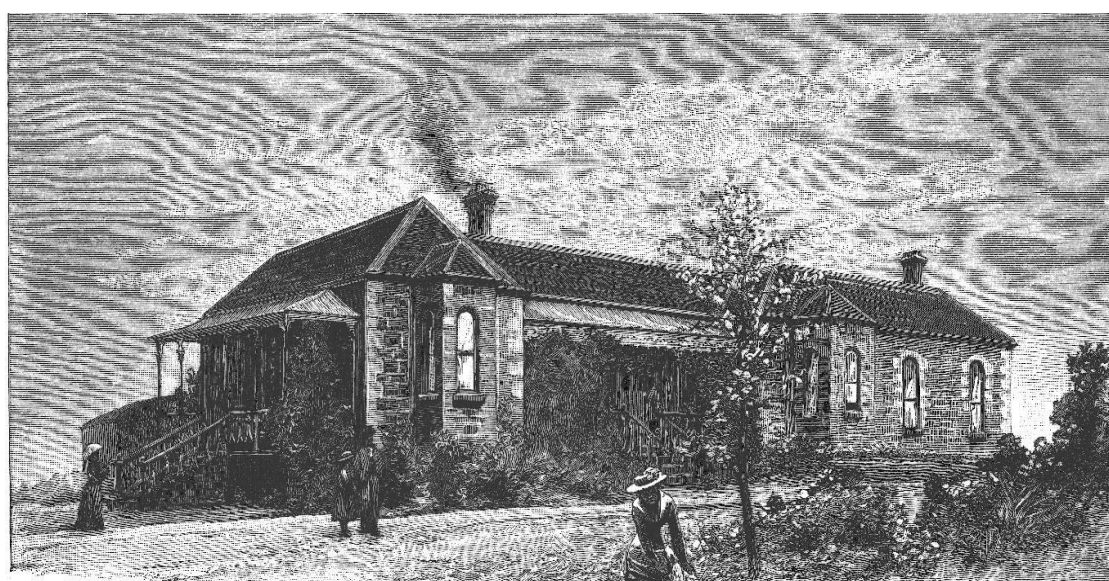
Figure 4.3 Sketch of Bolinda Vale homestead, c1880s. (Source: Public Record Office Victoria)

The advent of the gold rushes in the 1850s triggered an exodus of workers from pastoral stations. Aboriginal people provided a crucial labour force for pastoralists at this time. **Increased numbers of cattle were introduced to cater for the colony's rapidly increasing** population and growing demand for meat.

In 1850, William John Turner ('Big') Clarke, who had arrived in Melbourne from Van Diemen's Land in 1847, acquired vast holdings in the district that had a significant impact on the early development and landscape of the Macedon Ranges Shire. Clarke made a **successful application for 31,375 acres near Sunbury under the 'special survey' clause of** the *Waste Lands Act*. He also obtained the adjoining 31,000 acres, including land within Macedon Ranges Shire, under the Order-in-Council of 1847 (Anderson 1966). Both acquisitions displaced several existing pastoral licensees, including Henry Howey and Carre and Hamilton, and created an enormous single property. Clarke bred sheep for wool and meat, introducing the Leicester breed of sheep into Australia. In time he acquired the reputation of being the wealthiest man in the country (Anderson 1966; Close 2018: 23-9). The Clarkefield Railway Station, opened in 1861, is named after him.

Figure 4.4 Thomas Ham, detail from his map of pastoral runs in Victoria, 1852. The marked circles indicate pastoral stations. (Source: Map Collection, State Library Victoria)

The area of land occupied by pastoral runs was diminished through the introduction of a series of land acts from 1860 that aimed to establish a local yeomanry of small farmers Many squatters, however, were able to retain their hold over the most productive land through various loopholes in the legislation, notably through the practices of **'dummying' and 'peacocking'. 'Dummies' were nominal selectors acting on behalf of the squatter to** apply for land. After paying off their leases, the dummies transferred the title to the **squatter. 'Peacocking', or 'picking out the eyes' of the land, involved the squatter using** local knowledge to select the best land to render the country less useful for farming (Dingle 1984:61).

By 1870, when remaining pastoral leases were cancelled under the legislation of the *Land Act 1869*, squatters had established large private estates in Macedon Ranges Shire. Moreover, with the movement of local wheat farmers to land in northern Victoria which was made available under the *Land Act 1869*, remaining pastoralists purchased vacated farmland from the 1870s to extend their grazing ventures (Bick 1990:260). By the late 1880s, many of the farmers in Macedon Ranges Shire were breeders of sheep, cattle and horses (Bick 1990:262).

Twentieth-century developments

In the twentieth century, particularly during the boom years of the 1920s and 1950s, early farm complexes were improved and added to, and new ones built. Mechanised vehicles and equipment impacted on the use of farm buildings. After World War I, demand for fat lambs for the local market and as frozen carcasses for export provided market opportunity for graziers. The shortage of farm labour after World War II and the high prices for wool during the 1950s saw a further increase in the grazing of sheep (Bick 1990:263). The Clarkes at Bolinda Vale, for instance, established an English Leicester sheep stud and a Shorthorn cattle stud in the 1950s (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2:21).

Cattle

Cattle were grazed on pastoral runs established in Macedon Ranges Shire from 1837, but it was not until later decades that the breeding of cattle commenced. One of **Australia's premier Shorthorn breeders, Richard Morton, bought the Degraves' mill property 'Montpellier' in 1872 and renamed it 'Skelsmergh Hall' (Jones 1990:149).** The property continued its Shorthorn tradition under subsequent owners, including the Rennie family from Tylden. Elsewhere, polled Angus cattle, a Scottish breed, were introduced by William McFeeters when he bought the old Garth freehold in 1882 (Bick 1990:264). Another Scot, Duncan Macgregor, was a cattle and sheep breeder who owned properties at Chintin (the Clunie homestead) and at Riddells Creek. When his animals were ready for sale he drove them to the Newmarket saleyards in Melbourne (Woodhouse 2016:). **'Gisborne Park', owned by** J A Beattie, was a well-known Hereford stud **from a herd first**

established in 1869 and which had moved to 'Gisborne Park' c1910 (*Leader*, 19 Jan 1918:10).

Horse-breeding

In the nineteenth century, horses were in demand for transport and haulage, for riding hacks, and for hunting. Increasingly in the twentieth century, horses were trained for racing and trotting. A number of horse studs and training facilities were established in Macedon Ranges Shire to meet this demand.

Thoroughbred horses were bred and raced from the 1850s by Edward Dryden of the **Newham run, the Brock brothers of Bullanda (or Bolinda) Vale, Bolinda Vale's later** owner, Christopher Bagot and Joseph Harper of Snugborough Park, Woodend, who won the 1863 Melbourn Cup with his horse Banker (*Age*, 25 Jan 1938:14; Boxshall 2017:142).

In 1864, Scottish-born immigrants Thomas Watson and Agnes Cunningham purchased Gisborne Mains Farm. Thomas was a skilled horse breeder who imported stud stock from New Zealand. The farm achieved a level of affluence uncommon to farmers in the Gisborne district at the time (Tout-Smith 2003).

John Glenn of **'Homebush'** and Andrew Rowan of **'Barbower'** were prosperous enough to **be importing stud stock in the early 1870s (Bick 1990:262). 'Rock House' in Kyneton,** part of the former Saint **Agnes run, became a 'modern [racing] stud farm' founded by** Edward Argyle near his steam flour mill. After R I Argyle retired in 1923, the stud continued under owner G N Buckley (Bick 1990:263; Barned 1985:12).

'Pemberley' on the Colliban run was leased by Charles Forbes Fraser from 1874 to 1888, where he developed a successful racing stud and stable (Bick 1990:221). Part of **'Pemberley' lies outside of the Macedon Ranges Shire.**

Saleyards

After calls for the establishment of a local open, competitive market in Kyneton where livestock and other produce could be sold, in 1860 a site was proclaimed for a general and cattle market on land to the east of Mollison Street. The development of the market by the Kyneton Municipal Council in the early 1860s led to the naming of Market Street. The first sale of livestock was held at the saleyards, also known as the fairyards, in November 1866 (McKimmie and Strauch 2021:173–74). A weekly sale of grain and livestock and a fair was held every Thursday (VMD 1890:384). The regular livestock sales encouraged the establishment of stock and station agents, and grain merchants, a number of which established premises in the town.

The Kyneton Saleyards moved to its current site in 1964, however stock sales remained at the Market Street site for some years after (MRSC 2016:20). The Kyneton Saleyards underwent significant development throughout the 1980s with the addition of stacking

pens, live weight scales, selling pens, holding pens, truck wash facility and a sewage system (MRSC 2016:20). In 2010, the Council-owned saleyards celebrated 150 years of operations. It continues to operate today.

Pastoral complexes

Outbuildings on pastoral stations developed from the late 1830s. Early structures included a main house or homestead, often with separate kitchen and ancillary domestic buildings; men's huts; outlying shepherd's huts; stores; and sometimes a smithy. Later buildings included stables, woolshed, an improved homestead and workers' accommodation, and a gardener's hut. Some properties also had their own stallion box and slaughterhouse. Many homestead complexes were often consolidated by the 1870s. The scale of pastoral complexes related to the size of the estates.

Figure 4.5 Bluestone stables, Kyneton, photographed by John T Collins in 1963. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H97.250/2022)

Figure 4.6 Stables on the St Agnes estate, built in 1876. (Source: Victorian Heritage Register, H0309)

A number of properties in Macedon Ranges Shire demonstrate the theme of pastoralism. 'Skelsmergh Hall', built in 1859 for pastoralist William Degraves, can be seen in Cobb and Co Way, Kyneton (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 1:21). Another example is the bluestone homestead on Edward Dryden's Newham pastoral estate that survives in Garth Road, Woodend North. Charles Peters' home was constructed on the Garth estate c1847 and can be seen today in Garth Road (Boxshall 2017:54). 'Sunnyside' house built c1862 for Charles Peters' son William is in evidence today in Millers Road, Newham (Boxshall 2017:54). A weatherboard house built in the 1860s stands on the former Woodside pastoral property near Tylden (Bick 1990:214, 223).

'Gisborne Park', dating from c1874, can be seen from the Calder Freeway, Gisborne. The 'Bullengarook' homestead, on Bacchus Marsh Road, Bullengarook, built in 1870 from bluestone, also survives (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2:20).

'Bringalbit **Farm'**, established in 1870 on Sidonia Road, Sidonia, with the construction of a granite woolshed, was converted into a homestead in 1895. In 1907, the then owner W H Fysh installed 10 Wolseley shearing machines on the property (Bick 1990: 263).

Macedon Ranges Shire also contains significant landscapes that retain elements of past agricultural and pastoral practices that date from the late-1830s. William **Clarke's** Bolinda Vale Estate, for instance, on the Melbourne–Lancefield Road, with its wind break plantings and stone fencing, followed English farming principles (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2: 20–21).

4.2 Farming

Being rich country and situated not far from Melbourne, the Macedon Ranges Shire was one of the earliest areas of Victoria to be opened up for farming by European settlers.

In the nineteenth century, many settlers were occupied with mixed farming. It was common to have a diversity of production, including sheep, cropping, pigs and dairy. Cropping, supplemented with sheep grazing, was the main agricultural industry in the Shire, and was established from the 1850s in the areas of Kyneton, Malmsbury, Romsey, Carlsruhe and Lauriston. There was enormous demand for grain as a result of the large goldmining population. The first crop yields were so prolific that farmers embarked on a four-year rotation, planting wheat, barley, wheat, and oats for hay. Because of the **constancy of cropping, the land soon lost fertility and many of the district's farmers** moved to new land in northern Victoria opened under the 1869 *Land Act* (Bick 1990: 259, 260). Most cultivation in the Macedon Ranges Shire from this time involved the growing of stock feed: pasture grasses, wheaten and oaten hay, and barley (Bick 1990: 262).

In the rich moist mountain country in the Shire, where some Crown land formerly held under mining and timber licences became available for selection after 1865, farmers began to specialise in potatoes and in grains like barley (Bick 1990: 260). Peas and chicory were also important crops. The Ashbourne and Hesket districts, with their cool climate and volcanic soils, developed as potato-growing districts, and potatoes and root vegetables were planted in the Romsey district from the 1850s (Woodhouse 2020: 3).

Potato growers in the 1850s included W Hutchinson and Sidney Seymour of the Romsey–Lancefield district (Reid 1992: 27).

Potatoes were grown in larger numbers in the Romsey and Lancefield districts from 1870 as a part of crop rotation, a process introduced after the **district's** soils had been cropped out by the constant growing of wheat. Rotation comprised the sowing of peas, followed by barley, oats and potatoes. In 1899, it was reported that over 300 potato diggers in the Romsey district had lost their jobs because of wet weather (Reid 1992: 26–27).

In 1901 the Romsey and West Bourke Agricultural Society established its Annual Potato Show, which was revived in 1913 after a six-year hiatus (*Age*, 21 Aug 1913:7; *Weekly Times*, 23 Aug 1917:52). By the 1920s, the Romsey area was well known for its high-quality potatoes. Potatoes from the district were displayed in Melbourne, including in the window of F H Brunning of Elizabeth Street in 1924 (*Argus*, 17 June 1924:18). Today, in the southeast of the Shire, from Gisborne to Lancefield, and around Kyneton in the northwest, red clays support potato and grape growing (MRSC 2022).

On the early farming properties, the typical buildings were the farmhouse, stables, barn and sheds. There were also often coolrooms or a cheese room on dairy farms. Additional buildings included milking sheds, pigsties and chook sheds. Larger farms included **workers' accommodation.**

'Cadella Park', formerly 'Oatlands', in James Road, Cadello, and dating from c1845, is a nineteenth-century farm complex with twentieth-century additions (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 1:22; Vol 4:411). Gordon Farm, off Boundary Road, Lancefield, is a rare example of an 1850s farm complex (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 1:21). A number of surviving farm comp**lexes were established in the 1860s and 1870s, including 'Hay Hill', c1860, in Hamilton Road, New Gisborne; and 'Ferndale' (c1871) in Straws Lane, Mount Macedon** (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 4:317, 675). Early farming complexes in the Romsey area **included 'Eden Park' and 'Lancefield'.**

Figure 4.7 Harvest time near Kyneton, 1906. (Source: *Weekly Times*, 15 December 1906:28)

Macedon Ranges Shire retains landscape features that reflect the various stages of farming activity since the 1850s. Farming remained a significant industry up until the 1960s, with most residents up to that time being employed locally and most being dependent on agriculture (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2, Appendix 1:2). By the late 1970s, farm costs and low prices saw some farmers sell their properties for rural or residential subdivision or as weekend or 'hobby' farms. In 1972, 388,000 hectares (850 holdings) in the Shire were used for rural purposes: major uses were beef cattle, pigs and sheep.

Dairying

There were a number of large dairy operations in the Macedon Ranges Shire from the 1870s, but new technology in the 1880s and 1890s saw a significant increase in dairy production in the Shire, and across Victoria.

For many smallholders and mixed farming operations, dairying remained a side-line until the late 1880s and 1890s when more local farmers took up dairying as a larger part of their operations. Dairying enterprises increased in size and number from 1889 when district creameries and butter factories were established (Bick 1990:264). In the 1890s, the new De Laval machine separator was promoted by the Department of Agriculture, and in 1891 an ice car was added to the morning goods train from Bendigo to Melbourne so that fresh farm butter could be collected from stations and sidings.

Horticulture and floriculture

With its cool climate and high rainfall, parts of the Shire established a reputation as important horticultural centres. Cleared areas at Mount Macedon were used to establish private gardens, orchards and plant nurseries. The forests of Mount Macedon also supplied plant collectors with large tree ferns and other rare species. Ferdinand von Mueller collected tree ferns from Mount Macedon for the Melbourne Botanic Gardens and also a specimen of Monster Fern (*Todea africana*) in 1871, which he sent to Sir Joseph Hooker at Kew Gardens in England (VMCP).

The first State Nursery in Victoria was established at Macedon in 1872, on approximately 30 acres (VHD, NT 208342). William Ferguson was appointed its first director in 1872 and Joseph Firth managed the nursery from 1881 (Davies 2019:74; Fox 2000). The State Nursery provided plant stock for Victorian Government and local government purposes. Up until its closure in the mid-twentieth century, it supplied trees to municipalities in the present-day Macedon Ranges Shire and across Victoria for state schools, charitable institutions, street tree planting, and other municipal purposes until the mid-twentieth century. The nursery also provided plant stock to private land holders at Mount Macedon.

John Smith established a nursery at Riddells Creek in 1863, which comprised 10 acres of fruit trees and ornamental trees, including 50 varieties of oak (Moulds 1991:7).

Horticulturalists and landscape designers Taylor and Sangster of Toorak opened a nursery at Mount Macedon in 1876. They had established a successful business importing rare and exotic plants, which they made available to local gardens and the Melbourne Botanical Gardens, but also exported to other countries such as New Zealand (Milbourne 1978:77). William Sangster was responsible for the design of several gardens at Mount Macedon, including Sir George Verdon's 'Alton'.

Nurseryman Nathaniel Ronalds opened a flower nursery at Macedon in the 1880s which occupied 24 acres of ground with a creek running through it. He cultivated a vast array of flowers, including 6 acres of bulbs (Leader, 1888). He reputedly supplied his Melbourne florist shop in Swanston Street with fresh flowers daily (Guest 1990:101; TBA Planners 1994, Vol 4:540). Ronalds Nursery was later taken over by Mr Davies (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 4:540). In the 1980s the Society florist Kevin O'Neill developed his property 'Marnanie' at Mount Macedon for flower production, which supplied his Melbourne floristry business.

The growing of daffodils has long been a specialty in Macedon Ranges Shire. Nathaniel Ronalds established a large area for daffodils at his Macedon nursery in the 1880s (Guest 1990:101). Alister Clark of 'Glenara' at Bulla was a successful breeder of roses and daffodils between World War I and World War II. He inspired and assisted Hugh Dettmann of Kyneton to commence a daffodil breeding program. Dettmann in turn assisted Eve Murray of Langley to begin growing daffodils from seed ('Hugh Dettman, Eve Murray & Alister Clark', *Monument Australia* 2023). Other important breeders included Noel Jenkins and Fred Silcock. Today, daffodil bulbs that can be traced back to these breeders are highly sought after (KHS 2023). John Walker is also noted as having introduced daffodils to Kyneton (KHS, pers com, 2022).

In 1923, the Kyneton Horticultural Society established an annual daffodil show. The judge of the 1924 show, the horticulturalist and naturalist E E Pescott, advised the society to encourage daffodil culture in the district and exhibit its blooms in the large Melbourne shows (*Argus*, 29 Sept 1924:11).

In 1986, as a local project in Kyneton to mark the 1988 Bicentenary, an area measuring two metres wide and one mile long area was planted with daffodils. This became a noted attraction of Burton Avenue, Kyneton, during the spring flowering period and was often included as a feature of Victoria's Open Garden Scheme (now defunct) (KHS, pers com, 2022).

In 1992, a plaque was installed and a daffodil garden established in the Kyneton Botanic Gardens to commemorate local daffodil breeders Hugh Dettman, Eve Murray and Alister Clark (*Age*, 1 Sept 1992:32). Today, the Kyneton Daffodil and Arts Festival continues to celebrate daffodil growing in the Kyneton district.

Viticulture

The cool climate and large area of elevated plains and mountain slopes in Macedon Ranges Shire were found to provide optimal conditions for wine-growing. Vineyards were established from the 1840s in the districts of Riddells Creek, Carlsruhe and Darraweit Guim (MRW 2020). Vines were planted at Darraweit Guim and Riddells Creek in the 1840s-50s by the Jackson brothers, and by William and Walter Clarke of Clarkefield (MRW 2020). Henry and Robert Foreman also planted vines along Sandy Creek at 'Holyrood' in the 1850s, and George Knight planted 10 acres at 'Beulah's' in 1889, all in the Riddells Creek area (MRW 2020). Three acres of vines were also established by Robert Barbour at Bullengarook in 1868 (*Argus*, 17 Oct 1868:8). A significant vineyard was established at Lauriston in 1865 on 'The Honeysuckle', an outcrop of basaltic soil adjoining Honeysuckle Creek (Honeysuckle Road) southwest of Lauriston township (MHS, pers com, 2022).

The 1890s economic depression and the loss of British markets finished the wine industry well before the arrival of the vine louse phylloxera that destroyed other vineyards across Victoria (Reid 1992:38).

Viticulture was revived in the area in the late 1960s with plantings at Virgin Hills Winery in Lauriston by Tom Lazar, and in 1971 by Gordon Knight at Granite Hills in Baynton. This was followed in 1977 by Gordon Cope-Williams' plantings at Romsey and Bob Nixon's planting of Gisborne Peak Winery at Gisborne South in 1978. The Hanging Rock Winery at Newham, the Portree Winery at Lancefield, and Rosebery Hill Winery in Kyneton were established in 1983–84 (MRW 2020). Other wineries were established in the 1990s, including the Cope-Williams Winery at Romsey.

Farmers' commons

Farmers' commons were established in many localities in the Macedon Ranges Shire from the early 1860s through a provision in the *Land Act 1860*. Farmers' commons, which usually comprised a few hundred acres, were reserved at Carlsruhe, Kyneton, Lauriston, Newham and Tylden in 1861 (*VGG*, 8 March 1861:511, 512, 514). Other commons were reserved at Woodend and Lancefield.

Farmers' commons were designated as Crown reserves and managed by the local municipal council; a herdsman was also usually employed for day-to-day management. They were specifically designed to assist small farmers rather than pastoral leaseholders. They provided grazing rights for local farmers and were instrumental in enabling local farmers who had selected land under the 1860 *Land Act* to run their dairy cows, horses, and other stock.

Town commons, which were also reserved in a number of towns, provided grazing land for the ratepayers of that township.

Fencing

Unlike the early pastoral runs, small holdings were invariably fenced from the outset. Fencing was an essential improvement stipulated under the selection acts of the 1860s. Early fencing was largely the post-and-rail style but was also constructed of local materials such as stone, log and brush. In the 1860s, 'live fences' made from gorse, cypress and hawthorn were planted along paddock boundaries. In volcanic areas such as Lancefield and Springfield, dry stone walls were constructed from readily available surface stone. Many of these walls were built by skilled stone-wallers in the 1860s. John Dewar at 'Hay Hill' farm built stone walls in the mid-1860s using surface stone he cleared from the property (*South Australian Register*, 19 April 1875: 7). At his Springfield farm, John Hurst built five miles of stone walling in the mid-1870s, which measured three feet wide at the base, rising to four feet high, and measuring one foot wide at the top (*Leader*, 20 Feb 1875: 7).

Wire was in use as a fencing material by the 1870s. In addition, shelterbelts of cypress and pine trees were planted to protect crops and livestock from winds.

4.3 Gold-mining

Although Macedon Ranges Shire did not experience the large-scale migration seen on the goldfields of Ballarat and Bendigo, mining activity, which occurred from 1851 through to the 1950s, was nevertheless an important factor in shaping the cultural landscape of the area.

Limited gold-mining occurred in the Macedon and Bullengarook districts where gold was found at Middle Gully (later known as Macedon) in 1851. This brought prospectors and facilitated the establishment of hotels, blacksmiths and stores to provide for the needs of diggers who were heading north to Forest Creek (Castlemaine) and Bendigo (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2: 23). Other gold-bearing seams between Macedon and Blackwood were given only limited attention by prospectors until 1888 when a reef between Macedon and the Wombat State Forest was judged by mining investor Henry Fields of Ballarat to contain 'good gold-carrying stone'. A syndicate was established soon after to mine the reef and by 1889 the Mount Macedon Gold Mining Company had been formed (*Kyneton Observer*, 17 Nov 1888: 3). Fossicking occurred from time to time in the Black Forest between Woodend and Gisborne, but in 1904 a more concerted effort was made to mine gold when a small group of prospectors sank a shaft on a quartz reef and struck gold (*Age*, 22 Jan 1904: 6). Some gold-mining was also undertaken in the Spring Hill area through to the 1860s (Bick 1990: 252). Gold was discovered in Clowes Forest at Tylden in 1859 (Boxshall 2017: 103). Gold was also found at Goldie in 1854, with alluvial and quartz reef mining continuing in the Springfield district into the 1930s (Sorraghan 2021: 12).
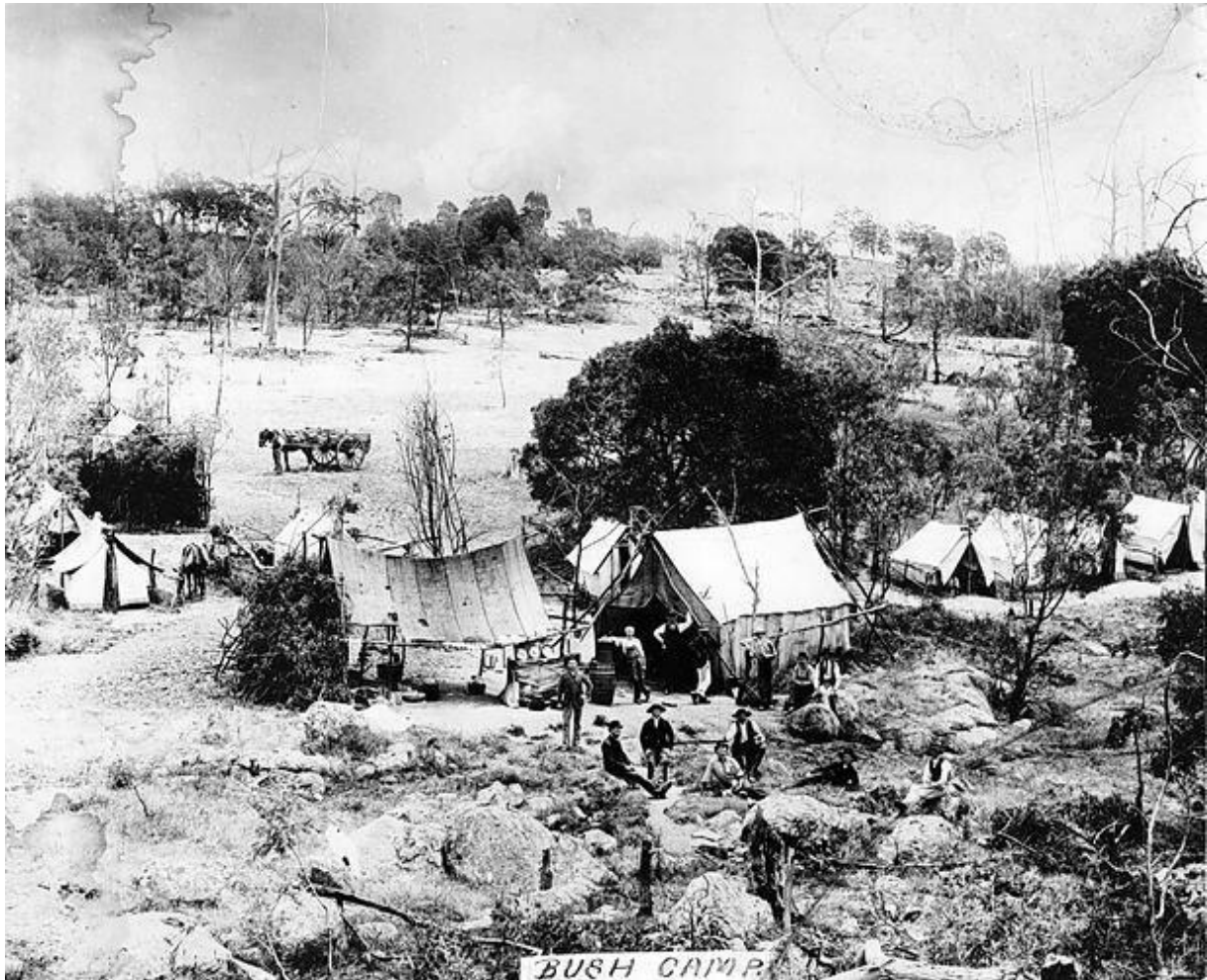
Figure 4.8 Gold-mining camp, Kyneton district, 1865. (Source: Museum Victoria, item MM 7116)

Taradale Mining Division

The majority of gold-mining in the Shire took place in the districts of Malmsbury and Lauriston, which formed part of the Taradale Mining Division. Malmsbury was the main town in what was commonly known as the Coliban gold diggings, which extended from Lauriston to Taradale.

1851–1887

During the period 1851–1887 in the Taradale Mining District shallow alluvial sinking and quartz and deep lead mining occurred, with high gold production maintained by a string of rich gold discoveries made first by deep lead miners and then by quartz miners (Bannear 1993:5).

Alluvial mining

Mining commenced in the Taradale Mining Division in 1851 with the discovery of shallow alluvial gold along the Coliban River near Lauriston. The alluvial gold was, however, found to be quite poor and thus did not attract many diggers from surrounding goldfields. The Division's peak period was from the mid-1860s to the late 1880s. By the turn of the century, only very small-scale quartz mining was in existence. A distinctive feature of mining in the Division's was that most of it was carried out on land that had been already taken up for pastoral purposes. This resulted in conflict between miners and landowners over the right to mine on private land (Bannear 1993: 3).

Alluvial gold prospectors included Chinese miners who were widely scattered over the Division in the period 1860–1865. Localities favoured by the Chinese included the flats along the Coliban River at Lauriston and Kangaroo Creek to the southwest of Malmsbury (Bannear 1993: 74–77).

Quartz mining

On the whole, the quartz mines in the Taradale Mining Division provided returns from the surface stone but the yield decreased dramatically the deeper the level, and by the time the water level was hit, usually around 90–100 feet, the neighbouring claims had been amalgamated into a single property. The Division's gold-bearing reefs produced nothing of note in the 1860s to attract the large investment companies required to make them payable below the water level. Alluvial mining continued but mainly via puddling and sluicing (Bannear 1993: 6).

Quartz mining received a boost in the late 1860s after several mines changed hands, and by 1870 the Division was experiencing a quartz mining boom financed by company investors. Payable quartz was obtained from a number of reefs in Macedon Ranges Shire, including the Energetic or Russell's line of reef and the Kangaroo Reef near Lauriston, and Tommy Dodd or Brandenburg Reef near Malmsbury (outside the Shire), and saw significant investment in crushing plants. By 1873, however, the boom period was beginning to wane and investors were losing confidence. By the end of 1874, the Lauriston goldfield had collapsed and large-scale mining operations had moved out of the area and were confined to Taradale (Bannear 1993: 11, 14).

Quartz mining recommenced in 1882 near Malmsbury on the Kangaroo Reef and the newly discovered Queen's Birthday Reef. In December 1883, the Queen's Birthday obtained 2400 ounces of gold from only 400 tons of stone (Bannear 1993b: 15). By 1887, both quartz and deep lead mining were in decline (Bannear 1993: 16).

Deep lead mining

Tunnelling was carried out in the early 1860s to access the deep leads that ran under the basalt country between Taradale and Malmsbury and north of Lauriston (Bannear

1993:8). The expectation of rich finds resulted in significant speculation and instigated the Taradale Mining Division's first mining boom. In March 1865, the mining registrar reported that land, both private property and Crown land, had been taken up in great tracts. Speculation focused on the Coliban River valley running from Malmsbury north to the junction of the Coliban and Campaspe Rivers on the Bendigo goldfield where 6000 acres had been taken up by frontage (riverbank or tunnelling) claims. These claims for the most part, however, were purely speculative and lay idle until the mid-1860s (Bannear 1993:9).

New companies commenced deep lead operations from 1865 near Malmsbury, including in an area to the north of the Malmsbury township where the Mill Stream Company and the Lone Star Company sunk shafts, and on a government reserve to the west of the town taken up by leases and frontage claims. Another company, the Pemberley Company, started work at Kangaroo Creek on private property about two miles south of Malmsbury (outside the Shire). This company prospected both for alluvial (Frenchman's Lead) and quartz (Frenchman's Reef) gold and were the first of many to undertake both deep lead and quartz reefing operations (Bannear 1993:10).

The early 1880s saw another revival of deep lead mining between Malmsbury and Lauriston, including on the Malmsbury Reserve, but by 1887 both quartz and deep lead mining were in decline (Bannear 1993:16).

1888–1920s

The period from 1888 until the 1920s saw the demise of large-scale gold mining in the Taradale Division. From the 1880s, the fortunes of the division were marked by phases of revival and depression. During the late 1880s, it was yields from O'Connor's Freehold quartz mine (outside the Shire), near Malmsbury that propped up gold production figures, however by 1889 gold production at the mine had waned. Russell's Reef Company at Lauriston produced a rich yield of 3280 ounces in the final quarter of 1889 (Bannear 1993:17).

Deep lead mining was all but over by 1890. Quartz mining continued but provided only low yields and very little investment was made. A number of private co-operative parties of miners continued to prospect on O'Connor's Freehold and the Queen's Birthday Line (outside the Shire), near Malmsbury, with larger prospecting operations conducted at Lauriston under the banner of the Russell's Reef Amalgamated Gold Mining Co. Russell's Reef Amalgamated Co continued operations until 1911. The Malmsbury Alluvial Co also unsuccessfully prospected for a deep lead near Malmsbury in 1911 (Bannear 1993:18). In 1914, the government removed a small battery from Little Hampton to Lauriston, which was used to treat small parcels of ore mined by prospectors in the area (Bannear 1993:18).

Although mining activity continued in the Taradale Mining Division until the 1950s, mining in Macedon Ranges Shire had come to an end by the time of World War I. Mullock heaps in the Malmsbury and Lauriston districts demonstrate past mining activity. Many of the extant mining sites are listed on the Victorian Heritage Inventory.

4.4 Exploiting forest, water and other natural resources

Wood-cutting and sawmilling

Since the arrival of white settlers, the forests of the Macedon Ranges Shire have been used to provide hard, durable timber for sawmill logs, railway sleepers, fence posts, piles, firewood, building materials and mining timbers. Settlers often supplemented their farm income by working as sawyers and splitters at the many mills that operated in the forests, or found employment utilising timber by-products.

Hardwood

Following the first Melbourne land sales in 1837, a party of convicts commenced work in the forests around Mount Macedon, cutting timber to meet the expected demand for building materials in Melbourne. In 1841, William Robertson of Wooling pastoral station erected the first water-powered sawmill in the colony on the Barringo Creek, which ran for some thirty years. Little evidence of this era of sawmilling remains, however a log cabin in Eatons Road, Cherokee, may have been associated with American timber-cutters (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2: 17, 19; Vol 3: 34).

The great need for timber for gold-mining purposes and for building mining townships intensified timber cutting in the Macedon Ranges Shire. In the Black Forest and other forested areas around Macedon, Mount Macedon and Woodend, large trees were felled for use as props in mine shafts and timber for boilers. By 1854, the Dodgshon timber mill and the Christian timber mill were operating on the slopes of Mount Macedon (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2: 17). Large trees felled at Mount Macedon were conveyed downhill via chutes built on the mountain side (Whitworth 1865: 231)

Sawmills continued to be established in the Mount Macedon area in the 1860s. The mills were mostly water-powered and relied on numerous tramways built through the forest, Some of the tramways were built to connect with what was then the Mount Alexander Road (now the Calder Freeway) to allow for the transportation of the milled timber. One such sawmill at Mount Macedon was known as the Devil's Hole. In 1870, the Macedon Railway Station was handling 2400 tons of timber per month, mainly coming from Mount Macedon (Burns 2002: 13).
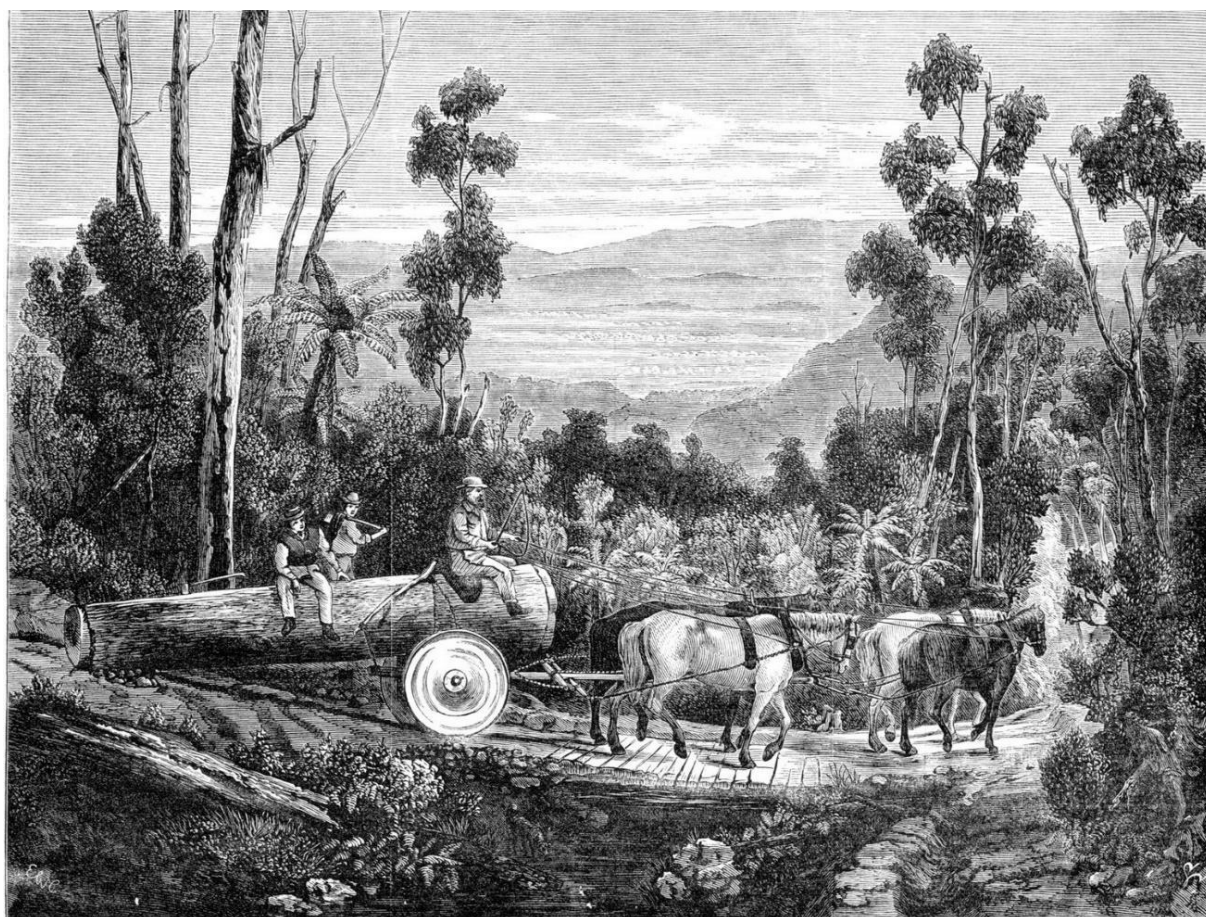
Figure 4.9 Sketch by Samuel Calvert depicting the hauling of timber at Mount Macedon, 1871.
(Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. IAN27/02/71/48)

A number of sawmills, some with timber tramways, operated in the 1860s in the
Woodend district at Woodend, Mount Macedon, Romsey, Hesket, Newham, and
Ashbourne. The sawmills played an important role in the development of the townships in
these areas, with the railway station at Woodend, established in 1862, playing a vital role
in transporting timber. The timber industry based in the Black Forest experienced
significant growth after the opening of the railway line through Woodend in 1861 (Ward
1988: 135).

In the 1950s, **Spencer's** Mill operated from the railway yards at Woodend, milling timber
for prefabricated homes, including houses built at Lake Eildon during the construction of
the Eildon Dam. Other timber mills included the Ligar Mill, Ricardi's Mill and the Black
Forest Mill (Barned 1985: 132).

In the forests of the Spring Hill area there were six sawmills in operation by 1865 (Bick
1990: 252). in the 1860s sawmills were also established in the forested areas of
Trentham East, Tylden and in the Cobaw forest. There were also sawmills at Riddells
Creek, which used the railway station to transport timber from the surrounding area.

In 1874, Frith and McCashney built a timber mill at Bullengarook which was later owned by La Gerche and Garrat. In 1937 Kay established a mill at the head of **Goodman's** Creek and after two years the mill was relocated a few kilometres north to East Bullengarook where it remained in operation until the 1950s. A tramway extended from one of the **McCashney mills to the first Kay mill (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 3:48). Anderson's** sawmill operated at Bullengarook through the 1930s (*Leader*, 5 Jan 1935:22).

Hardwood sawmills continued to operate in the Macedon Ranges Shire through the twentieth century, with two mills in existence in the Woodend–Kyneton area in 1985. These mainly produced unseasoned structural timber, with the lower grade timber sold for garden stakes and for use in pallet manufacture (LCC 1985:128–129). The other major timber product derived from Wombat State Forest in the 1980s was pulpwood derived from forest thinning and mill residues, which was used for hardboard manufacture (LCC 1985:130). In addition, preservative-treated transmission poles and farm timbers were an important product from the Wombat State Forest from the 1950s (LCC 1985:130). Firewood production increased from the 1970s, with six commercial firewood-cutters operating in the Wombat State Forest in 1985 (LCC 1985:131). Timber harvesting for sawlogs continued in the Wombat State Forest until 2007 (FCRPA 2022).

Softwood

To meet a requirement for softwood sawn timber and long-fibre pulpwood, and to supplement the timber supply from native hardwood forests, the planting of softwoods in Victoria commenced in the late-nineteenth century and increased under the management of the Forests Commission of Victoria, established in 1907. A plantation comprising pine **trees, for example, established in Malmsbury at 'Grand Vue Park' was formally opened in** June 1928 by MLA for Castlemaine and Kyneton, H S W Lawson (Bick 1990:270). Pine trees were also planted in the Wombat State Forest, with two softwood sawmills in operation at Woodend–Macedon in 1985 (LCC 1985:120, 122). Up until the 1983 Macedon bushfires, which burnt some 1420 hectares of softwood plantation, annual commitments of sawlogs and veneer logs from the Macedon plantations totalled approximately 8200 cubic metres. Provision was also made for the removal of round preservation timbers, and the supply of 3000 cubic metres of pulpwood to the particle-board plant in Ballarat (LCC 1985:121, 123).

Forest management

The need to protect resources in Victoria both for public benefit and commercial use was recognised from the 1850s, in response to the significant impact of the goldrushes. After a series of public inquiries and royal commissions, the government began to regulate the conservation of forests to ensure a timber supply and the protection of water catchments. The first land act passed by the Victorian Parliament (*Sale of Crown Lands Act 1860*) provided for the reservation of lands permanently or temporarily for a wide

variety of public purposes to ensure that the **needs of Victoria's rapidly** increasing population were catered for. Areas of forest were reserved after an enquiry in 1865 and local boards were appointed to oversee forest management. In 1888 the first Conservator of Forests, G S Perrin, was appointed to oversee the operation of more systematic forest management, including the establishment of plantations, nurseries, thinning operations and a royalty system. In 1907, the *Forests Act* created the Department of State Forests, which in 1918 became the Forests Commission of Victoria (FCV).

In the mid-nineteenth century the forests of Macedon Ranges Shire were recognised as significant in size and extensive in area. In 1868, the Secretary of the Department of Mines, Robert Brough Smyth, visited the Mount Macedon State Forest. Within one acre of **messmate forest near Messrs Carpenter's sawmills, he counted 42 large standing trees** and 12 saplings, noting '**Many** of the largest of these trees were from six to seven feet in **diameter four feet from the ground, and from 200 to 220 feet high'** (Brough Smyth 1869:27).

Forests in Macedon Ranges Shire, including the Bullarook, Wombat, Mount Macedon and Mount Disappointment forests, were reserved from the 1860s. In 1867, the Macedon State Forest was temporarily reserved (*VGG*, 2 April 1867:641). Such was the demand for timber that by 1873 the only viable timber for milling remaining on the southern side of the Macedon Ranges was at the head of Barringo Creek (Moulds 1991:31). In addition to timber-cutting, the forests of Macedon Ranges Shire were used for charcoal production, wattle-bark harvesting, grazing and honey production. Settlers established eucalyptus distilleries and charcoal retorts, as these operations required little capital to establish (G&MMDHS 2022).

The first area of forest in the Wombat State Forest was reserved in 1868 and extended in 1869 (*VGG*, 1869). In 1882, the western portion of the Wombat State Forest, comprising 63,000 acres, was temporarily reserved for the purpose of growing timber (RC 1899:3). The wholesale removal of trees nonetheless continued. In 1899, for instance, the **'wanton destruction' of timber in** the Black Forest, between Woodend and Gisborne, was reported:

> … young trees have been cut down in all directions. The state of things going on calls for prompt and vigorous repressive measures, otherwise the forest will be completely destroyed (*Age*, 17 Oct 1899:6).

In 1897, an enquiry recommended the reservation of forests to ensure a supply of timber to the mining industry, including the reservation of 145,000 acres of the Wombat State Forest in the Daylesford–Trentham area (Moulds 1991:23). In 1899, the Royal Commission on State Forests and Timber Reserves stated that:

> This reserve (known for many years as the Bullarook Forest) is situated in the counties of **Bourke, Grant, Talbot, and Dalhousie… [with] the forest extending along the slopes and**

foot-hills of the Great Dividing Range from Mount Macedon, on the east, to the neighbourhood of Rocky Lead, a station on the Daylesford and Creswick railway line, on **the west…**

For a period of over 40 years Wombat reserves have been the main source of supply for sawn hardwood and fencing material to the Melbourne, Ballarat, Castlemaine and Bendigo districts; and for a considerable, though shorter, period for laths, slabs, and mining props, to all the chief gold-field towns in the central district. From 1852 up to the year 1897 it is estimated that timber to the value of seven millions sterling had been taken out of it. Some twenty years ago the annual output of sawn timber alone was over 60,000,000 superficial feet, but in 1896 this yield had dwindled to 7,000,000 **feet…Only** eight mills are now established within or on the borders of the forest, and their yearly output ranges **from 300,000 to 850,000 feet…The present condition of the Wombat Reserve, aptly described as a "ruined forest" by several witnesses in the timber trade…is the result of** mismanagement and neglect of the past 30 years (Royal Commission 1899: 3, 5).

Although the Royal Commission recommended the permanent reservation of 82,000 acres of the Wombat State Forest, logging continued. Some sections of the forest were so extensively cut over for mining and structural timbers that they were closed from the early 1900s until the late 1940s (LCC 1985: 124).

More recently, local action has contributed to the halting of logging in the Wombat State Forest, increased the protection of the Cobaws, and established Mount Macedon as a Regional Park (MRSC 2018: 35). In 2021, the State Government announced that the majority of the Wombat State Forest and all of Lerderderg State Park would be included in the new Wombat–Lerderderg National Park.

State Nursery

The State Nursery at Mount Macedon promoted greater understanding about the growth of forest trees in Victoria. From c1880, forestry officers were provided with training at the Macedon State Nursery and adjacent plantations and state forests for two years before being sent to other areas to supervise forestry activities. This training was replaced by programs run by the Victorian School of Forestry, which opened at Creswick in 1910 (Moulds 1991: 159).

In 1873, three cottages were erected on the reserve to house the foreman and other nursery employees (Moulds 1991: 21). Early endeavours included the planting of 50 acres of cleared land on Mount Macedon with Deodar Cedars, Himalayan Spruces and silver firs to **'test the timber trees of Europe' in local conditions (Moulds 1991:21).**

Trees from the Macedon State Nursery were also used to establish plantations and small subsidiary nurseries on Mount Macedon itself. The first of these small nurseries was established in 1882. It occupied a site of 75 acres that had been cleared of all scrub and fallen debris and planted with a large range of exotic conifers and deciduous trees, including British and American oak, ash, and sycamores (Bannear 1997: np).

First established to provide plant stock for afforestation on Crown land, by the 1890s the State Nursery was providing plants to state schools, charitable institutions, municipal councils, and selectors who had taken up farming land. The average output of 150,000 plants per annum comprised chiefly pines, in addition to gums, oaks, ash, maples and willows (*Australasian*, 1 Feb 1896:11). In 1896, the State Nursery was a popular destination for Melbourne visitors. **It comprised the foreman's** cottage set in a landscape of drives and walks paved with quartz gravel, a fishpond/reservoir with a fountain, and specimen trees (*Australasian*, 1 Feb 1896:11).

Another small satellite nursery was established on Mount Macedon to shorten the transport distance to plantations. This nursery, likely opened in 1912, was established on an area of land near Sanatorium Lake. This lake was a water resource constructed during the early 1900s to serve the Macedon or Greenvale Sanatorium (Bannear 1997:np).

The nursery also housed a **boys'** forestry camp in the 1930s and provided accommodation for the **Australian Women's** Land Army during World War II (Moulds and Burns 1997:25).

The Macedon State Nursery and Mount Macedon Nursery were destroyed in the 1983 Ash Wednesday bushfires. New buildings were constructed at the nursery site in 1987. The Macedon State Nursery closed in 1995. All that remains of the original State Nursery is a Cork Oak avenue (planted in the 1960s), some remnant conifers and oaks, a palm, and a cement Italianate fountain (NTAV 208342). Exotic plantings from 1926 can still be seen at Sanitorium Lake (Bannear 1997:np).

Figure 4.10 Postcard view, showing the entrance to the Macedon State Nursery, Mount Macedon, c1920–54. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H32492/7618)

Forest camps

As a form of unemployment relief during the 1890s economic depression, men from the city were recruited to work on government projects in country areas. In 1892, for instance, the government spent £3500 employing two 50-man gangs to assist foresters at Macedon with thinning operations. Most of the forest workers were married men who had a trade (Bannear 1997: np).

During the Depression years of the 1930s, unemployed men were paid by the government to work on various schemes, known as relief or **'susso'** (sustenance) work. One of the main areas of work for the unemployed was in forestry. At the height of the scheme in Victoria, about 9900 men were involved in clearing fire-damaged timber, cutting access tracks, establishing plantations of exotic soft-woods and undertaking extensive thinning operations. In addition to the adult relief scheme, the Commonwealth and State governments established the Youths and Forest Conservation Plan, whereby young men aged between 16 and 20 years undertook various silvicultural operations under the supervision of the Forests Commission. The scheme was intended to improve the boys physically and mentally and prepare them for adult working life. The youths, as with the men on the 'susso' scheme, were housed in camps in the forests, which were known as 'boys' camps'. The youth scheme commenced in 1933, and by 1936 some 1276 youths were employed; in 1937 there were 825 youths employed in fourteen camps. The Youths and Forest Conservation Plan continued until 1940, when World War II made it redundant (Bannear 1997: np).

Boys' forestry camps were established at Wombat, Macedon and Upper Macedon (Mount Macedon) forest districts (Bannear 1997: np). One camp was located on Mount Towrong near Mount Macedon (*Argus*, 3 June 1936: 6). Boys were also housed in a camp at the Macedon State Nursery where they cut up firewood for distribution to the unemployed (Moulds and Burns 1997: 22, 58). Another camp was established near Sanitorium Lake and housed 40 boys aged 14–16 years old (Moulds and Burns 1997: 22).

To alleviate labour shortages during World War II, schoolboys' forestry camps were also conducted at Mount Macedon in the 1940s, with boys involved in the 'national effort' of chopping firewood for supply to the metropolitan area, including charitable institutions (*Age*, 12 Jan 1943: 4).

Another small camp was established at Macedon c1943 for members of the Civil Alien Corps, a group of mainly Italians and Germans from Queensland, but only operated for a short period (Moulds and Burns 1997: 26). The Civil Aliens Corps was established on 3 May 1943 as a means of giving relief to Australia's worsening manpower shortage as the war progressed. Under the regulations any male refugee alien or enemy alien between the ages of 18 and 60 could be directed to serve in the Civil Aliens Corps.

State school plantations

The promotion of forestry education in the Victorian state schools in the 1920s extended to a program that enabled state school children to plant forest trees for cultivation (usually of Radiata Pine). The proceeds of the sale of the trees went to the school. State school plantations were promoted by the Department of Education in the 1920s and again in the 1960s under the name of the State School Plantation Endowment Fund (Doyle 2000). One example of a number in Macedon Ranges includes the Gisborne Pine Plantation that was established in the 1920s as a plantation and a bird sanctuary.

Charcoal and eucalyptus oil

In the nineteenth century, charcoal was required to power forges and furnaces, and was manufactured by three main methods: in steel tanks; by building a kiln of dry wood covered with earth; or by burning wood in a pit dug into a side of a hill (Holth 2014:42). The main period of charcoal production in Victoria was during World War II when the industry was supported by the Victorian Government, which sought to establish an alternative fuel supply to petrol, which was heavily rationed. The Forests Commission established a State Charcoal Branch to stimulate and co-ordinate production, some of which occurred in the Macedon district, at Bullengarook, and in the Wombat State Forest (Bannear 1997:np). A number of individual charcoal burners operated in the Ashbourne and Trentham East districts with members of the Italian community involved, including the Ricardi family. Retort Lane in Ashbourne commemorates this enterprise (Holth 2014:42). The Marsh family, also of Ashbourne, relocated large, three-metre-high steel boilers to their property in Falloons Road to produce charcoal commercially. The enterprise operated from the 1950s to 1978 and the tanks can still be seen today (Holth 2014:46–48).

Although the distillation of eucalyptus oil in Victoria was centred on the Box-Ironbark and Red Gum forests, some activity also occurred in the Macedon district (Bannear 1997:np). Itinerant workers and others who sought to supplement their income established distilleries at Macedon from the 1890s (*Kyneton Observer*, 14 June 1894:3). At least three eucalyptus stills operated in the area in the 1930s (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2:27). A eucalyptus plant also operated near the gravel quarries in Woodend (Barned 1985:133). Residents in the Hesket, Cherokee and Ashbourne districts also operated private eucalyptus stills.

Water supply

In the early period of settlement, squatters relied on the water supplies that were used by the Kulin people, including springs and soaks, as well as the rivers and creeks.

Settlers used reliable water sources to build weirs and to create dams and diverted river water through the building of channels.

Water supply for gold-mining

In May 1862, the Victorian Legislative Assembly appointed a Select Committee to examine the cost and feasibility of bringing water from the Coliban River to the goldmining populations of Sandhurst (Bendigo) and Castlemaine. The Committee backed **engineer J M Brady's ambitious multipurpose scheme for mining, irrigation and town supplies. Brady's plan called for the construction of a large storage reservoir on the** Coliban River at Malmsbury and three smaller distribution reservoirs at Sandhurst and Castlemaine, all to be connected by an aqueduct 100 kilometres long (Powell 1989: 77). Work commenced in 1866 on the reservoir at Malmsbury but, because of engineering faults, the first water from the reservoir was not released until 1877. The reservoir **workforce boosted Malmsbury's population at this time. The Malmsbury Reservoir was** expanded in 1887 and 1940 (Coliban Water 2014).

The Coliban scheme was expanded from 1877 to supply the townships of Maldon, Kyneton, Taradale and Harcourt. Expansion involved the construction of an additional reservoir, the Upper Coliban Reservoir near Tylden, which was completed in 1902 and enlarged in 1917, 1925 and 1992 (Powell 1989: 83; Coliban Water 2014).

Water was supplied from 1934 to the Coliban system from a weir built on the Campaspe River at Ashbourne, by what became known as the Ashbourne channel. The channel diverted water to the Upper Coliban Reservoir; the Upper Coliban Reservoir being the major supplier of drinking water for townships such as Kyneton (Coliban Water 2023). In 1941, Lauriston Reservoir was added to the Coliban scheme (Bick 1990: 267; Coliban Water 2014).
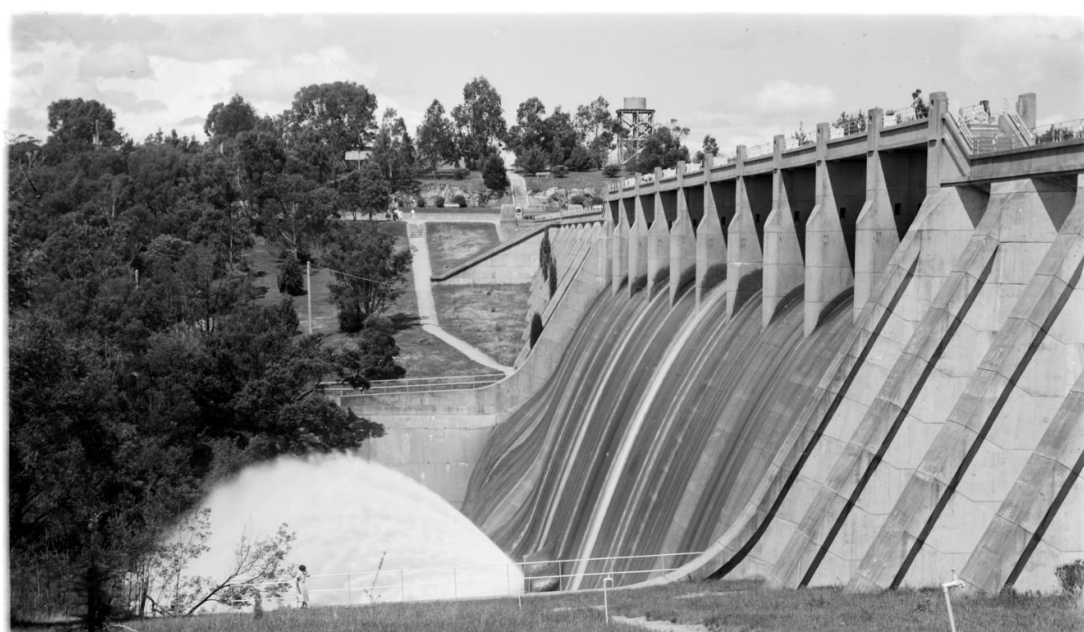

Figure 4.11 Lauriston Reservoir, 1956. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H32492/2175)

Water supply for stock and domestic purposes

The residents of the first settlements in the Shire depended on wells that accessed artesian water and large public dams for a water supply. Some townships, such as Malmsbury, relied on river water and spring water (Stevens 1987:66). Rainwater tanks were also used to collect water from the roof of the house.

The onset of dry years from 1878 instigated the development of a number of water supply schemes for the colony of Victoria. The *Water Conservation and Distribution Act 1881* enabled the establishment of Urban and Rural Waterworks Trusts to supply stock and domestic water. A number of water trusts were subsequently established from the 1880s, enabled by the *Water Act* of 1884, including those at Gisborne, Kyneton, Macedon, Riddells Creek, Romsey–Lancefield, and Woodend. The trusts improved the water supply to townships, for example through the installation of water towers to provide a gravity-fed supply.

By 1890, the Upper Macedon Waterworks Trust had constructed a weir across the Turitable Creek, which provided water for residents (VMD 1890:30). The Romsey Shire Waterworks Trust, formed in 1883, provided a town supply by building a weir on the Bolinda Creek in the Macedon Ranges. This included a water race over five miles long, a large flume, an inverted syphon and a pipe-head reservoir as well as a pipe track to convey the water into the township and water pipes throughout the town (VMD 1890:27–28).

After the dry years of the Federation Drought, from 1895 to 1902, government grants were provided to shires to excavate public tanks, or reservoirs, in settled areas.

With the formation of the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission (SRWSC), through the provisions of the *Water Act 1905*, responsibility for the conservation and distribution of Victoria's rural water supplies was vested in the Commission. As a consequence, the management of the Coliban system and all existing water trusts was taken over by the SRWSC. Rosslynne Reservoir was built in 1974 on Jackson Creek as part of the SRWSC's postwar expansion works and supplied water for domestic and irrigation purposes to the areas of Sunbury, Riddells Creek and Gisborne.

In 1984, the Rural Water Commission was established to operate and maintain most of the State's water supply system, including storages and watercourses. Under the *Water Act 1989*, and with the establishment of the Rural Water Corporation in 1992, regions were consolidated and greater local management powers given to Regional Management Boards. Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs), established under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*, are responsible for the integrated planning and coordination of land, water and biodiversity management in each river catchment. The Macedon Ranges Shire falls within the boundaries of the North Central Catchment

Management Authority, the Port Philip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority, and the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority.

Quarries

The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung stone-hatchet quarry, known as Wil-im-ee Moor-ring (Mount William), near Lancefield, is highly significant to Wurundjeri Woi- wurrung people. It is the only place in Macedon Ranges Shire on the National Heritage list (NHL place ID 105936).

Due to the volcanic nature of the area, settlers established a number of quarries across the district. Bluestone quarrying took place at Malmsbury with the stone used for the construction of local buildings until it was shipped elsewhere. From 1862, Malmsbury became an important loading railway station for the construction of the Melbourne and Murray River Railway. Bluestone from quarries in Malmsbury and Carlsruhe was used in the construction of station buildings, road and river bridges, platforms, culverts, retaining walls and viaducts (Bick 1990:249, 266). In 1870, two quarries were in operation at Malmsbury, producing 1000 tons of bluestone that was worth £1050. The stone was popular both locally and in Melbourne for use in flagging, kerbing, pitching, guttering and for street crossings. It was also **used in the construction of Goulburn's Catholic cathedral and the Wentworth Gaol, both in New South Wales, and St Patrick's Cathedral in** Melbourne (Bick 1990:267; Stevens 1987:20). The disused quarry sites are in evidence in Malmsbury today.

Quarries were also established at Woodend to supply gravel for the railway line. A spur line to the quarries from the main Melbourne and Murray River railway was built to transport the gravel (Barned 1985:133). In the 1860s there were quarries in Kyneton that supplied road gravel (Whitworth 1865:214)

A sandstone quarry was in operation at Lauriston by 1892. The stone was used locally as well as in the construction of the University of Melbourne**'s Arts Building and clock tower,** built between 1920 and 1925, and the interior of Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne in 1929. The quarry was submerged by the waters of Lauriston Reservoir, which was completed in 1941 (Bick 1990:267).

A slate quarry at Bullengarook East operated in the 1930s (*Leader*, 5 Jan 1935:22) and remains visible today west of Bullengarook on Jackson Creek. A slate quarry also operated near Macedon in the 1890s.

A basalt quarry at Riddells Creek, now the site of Wybejong Park, provided the stone for two railway bridges on the Melbourne–Bendigo railway line (ToMelbourne.com.au 2021).

The Newham Diatomite Mine is an unusual example of a once significant local industry. Diatomite is a siliceous sedimentary rock composed mainly of the fossilised skeletal

remains of single-celled organisms called diatoms. It is used for insulation and as a filtering material (Earth Resources 2021).

Chalk was mined underground at Rochford for export to Japan for insulation in furnace manufacturing; it was also used in the manufacture of water filters and toothpaste. The mine closed in 1961 (Barned 1983:56).

Brick-making

There was suitable clay for brickmaking in a number of areas within the Shire. In 1865, a brick-kiln was in operation at Lancefield and brickworks were located in the vicinity of Romsey (Whitworth 1865:216, 320). Hardie's Brick and Tile Works operated on the Kyneton–Tylden Road in Kyneton from the 1860s to 1900 (McKimmie and Strauch 2021:213). A large brickmaking site was opened at Tylden c1863 by A Hardie and W Calder from Kyneton and revived again by Benjamin Beer in the late 1890s (Bick 1990:255).

Tweddles Brickworks in Lancefield was also a significant operation. Another brick kiln operated at Woodend until the 1950s (Barned 1985:132).

4.5 Transforming the land and waterways

Significant changes have been made to the landscape of the Macedon Ranges Shire since the mid-1830s. The flocks and herds of pastoralists transformed Victoria's pre-European grasslands and open woodlands and caused soil erosion problems. Weeds have been introduced and trees cut for mill logs, railway building, for mine props, for firewood and to prepare the ground for crops. Exotic trees have been planted around homesteads and farm buildings and hedges of gorse and hawthorn, used as fences and shelter, evident by 1867, were sometimes planted along a low line of stones or a post-and-rail or post-and-wire fence. These created a harbour for rabbits. In 1925, Kyneton Shire president Martin McKenna told a conference of municipalities that had been convened to discuss the provisions of the *Noxious Weeds Act* that Kyneton had about 200 miles of furze hedges, which provided shade and protection for stock. Removing them, he argued, would be 'ruinous to the farmer and small landholder' (*Argus*, 15 Jan 1925:12).

Due to extensive changes in land management and settlement impacts, of the 33 Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs) known in the Shire, 13 are listed as 'endangered' in Victoria (less than 10 per cent of pre- settlement coverage); nine are vulnerable (10–30 per cent of pre-settlement coverage); four are depleted (30–50 per cent of pre-settlement coverage); and six are of least concern (50 per cent of pre-settlement coverage). There is also one wetland formation which protects a significant 'Plains Sedgy Wetland' community (MRSC 2018:37).

As a result of habitat clearance, numerous native animals have disappeared from the Macedon Ranges Shire including the Southern Brown Bandicoot (last recorded in 1968), **Leadbeater's** Possum (last recorded in 1995) and the Eastern Quoll (last recorded in the late 1800s). The Greater Glider, while known to occur in the Wombat State Forest, has not been recorded on Mount Macedon since 1987 (MRSC 2018: 33).

In addition, many of the waterways in the Shire have been adversely affected by settlement. Removal of native vegetation for agriculture has increased run-off, which, in turn, has caused erosion within watercourses. Together with other activities such as goldmining, this erosion has caused the deposition of silt and sand in the lower reaches of the rivers. In addition, clearing of the original vegetation has allowed water tables to rise, and saline groundwater has moved into the streams (LCC 1985: 43).

5 Building industries and workforce in Macedon Ranges Shire

5. Building industries and workforce in Macedon Ranges Shire

Early commercial activity in the Macedon Ranges Shire included inns, stores and blacksmiths that serviced travellers to the goldfields and the emerging farming settlements. Since the late nineteenth century, accommodation and infrastructure has been established to attract tourists. Macedon Ranges Shire has also been a centre for processing raw materials and for manufacturing.

5.1 Processing raw materials

Dairy factories

Being a relatively early agricultural district, the production of dairy products was established from the 1850s. There was substantial cheese production at many of the large properties, including Peter Mitchell's 'Eden Park' on the Five Mile Creek near Romsey (*Australasian*, 10 Feb 1883: 24). By the 1870s, Joseph Riddell was operating an extensive and sophisticated cheese-making enterprise at his Monegeetta farm, which included a coagulating room and other specialised buildings (*Australasian*, 26 Feb 1876: 23).

From the 1880s, dairying was transformed in Victoria from a home-based operation to a large-scale factory-based industry. This change was facilitated by several innovations: the development of effective refrigeration for transport and factories; the popularity of the de Laval separator, which allowed the large-scale extraction of cream in centrally located factories; and the Babcock tester that enabled the accurate measurement of butterfat in milk (Dingle 1984: 116).

Milk, cheese and butter factories subsequently opened from the 1880s in the Macedon Ranges Shire. In 1882 the Melbourne Milk Supply Company built a two-storey corrugated iron factory in Romsey, adjacent to the Romsey–Lancefield railway line. Cheese and butter plants were added to the factory, which operated until 1960 (Padgett 2022).

From the late 1880s, local farmers banded together to establish co-operative dairy factories. This allowed a greater volume of milk to the produced, which ensured market advantage.

The Lancefield Butter Factory opened in 1894 with two De Laval separators. As adjuncts to the factory, other creameries operated at Rochford, Springfield, and Baynton (*Age*, 3 Oct 1894:6; *Australasian*, 4 Jan 1896:9). A fire destroyed the Lancefield building in 1930 (*Kilmore Free Press*, 3 April 1930:2).

The Kyneton and District Butter and Cheese Factory opened in 1891 in a converted flour mill established by David Rannard in the 1860s (*Kyneton Guardian*, 16 July 1918: 3; NTAV B6387). The factory operated until 1974 (Jones 1990:151). In addition, the Newstead Butter Factory operated a branch factory from its premises at 87–89 Piper Street, Kyneton, from 1932 until 1946 (McKimmie and Strauch 2021:206–209).

Figure 5.1 Kyneton Butter and Cheese Factory, originally built as a flour mill in the 1860s. (Source: National Trust of Australia (Vic) Register, B6387)

The Couangalt Butter Factory opened in 1893 and closed in 1899-1900 (Butler 2009:127–128). A cheese factory that operated in Quarry Road, Woodend, closed in the 1950s (Barned 1985:133).

The Malmsbury Creamery opened in 1892 and the Woodend Creamery opened in 1893 in Brooke Street (*Kyneton Guardian*, 23 March 1892:3; Boxshall 2017:191). Other creameries operated at Carlsruhe, Mount William, Newham, Rochford and Springfield (Williams 2004:58; TBA Planners 1994, Appendix 1:252). The creamery established at Bullengarook in 1893 initially treated 500 gallons of milk per day before local dairy farmers invested in their own separators from 1899 (*Bacchus Marsh Express*, 24 Nov 1894:3; 15 July 1899:3).

The Macedon Butter Factory was a private enterprise established at Davies Nursery, near the Macedon railway station, in 1893 (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 4:540; *Kyneton Observer*, 3 Oct 1893:3).

Once small farm separators were more widely installed in the 1920s, the factories began to close.

Flour mills

Flour mills were established where there was sufficient population to sustain production, as well as a suitable means of transportation available. The first flour mills in the area were built in the 1850s, particularly in the Kyneton and Malmsbury areas. Wheat production increased significantly in the 1860s with the growing population of farmers, and the building of railway lines that linked grain growing and milling to markets in Melbourne.

Table 5.1 Flourmills in Macedon Ranges Shire. (Sources: Jones 1990, cited by Vines 2017; VHD 2022; TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2:16; Goss 1983:52)

Built	Closed	Mill name/owner	Location	Power source	Notes
1841	1880s	**Willoughby's** Corn Mill	Coliban River, Tylden	Water	Demolished
1855	1867	Coliban Water and Steam Mill, Joseph W Ellis and Hutchinson, Mr Maisbeck	Coliban River off Malmsbury Road, Malmsbury	Water and steam (1857) overshot wheel	Burnt entirely by fire
1855–56	1850s	Windmill Farm, Joseph Hall and William Hoad	1203 Kyneton Metcalfe Road, Kyneton	Wind	H311/HO127
[1856			Lauriston	Steam]	
1857	1870s?	Argyle Steam Mill	Banks of the Coliban River near Rock House	Steam	Demolished
1859	1872	'Montpellier' William Degraves,	688 Cobb and Co Way, Kyneton	Steam	H310/HO26 H1166/HO27
1857	c1865	Riverview Mill/ Wards Mill, William Degraves, Joseph Ward	2 Wards Lane, Kyneton	Steam	HO153
1860s	1891	David Rannard	96–100 Piper Street, Kyneton	Steam	Converted to a butter factory

Built	Closed	Mill name/owner	Location	Power source	Notes
1861	1895	Blyth Brothers, J W Ellis	120 Mollison Street, Malmsbury	Steam	HO148
1862	1960s?	Frederick Castilla and several owners; George Willis from 1898	18–20 Piper Street, Kyneton	Steam	H2186/HO262
1864	1899	G Miller 1860s; J F McKenzie and Co 1880s; Otto J Muller 1899	Riddells Creek	Water turbine	Destroyed by fire, rebuilt and used as a flock mill
1866		Walter Brydon, Newham Flour Mill	Dons Road, Newham		Converted to a bacon factory in c1890, demolished c1939

A feature of the early mills was the use of Malmsbury bluestone in their construction (Jones 1990:144). Many of the mills were water-powered (including steam-powered), and several of these were built on the Coliban River. A private mill at Windmill Farm, Kyneton, was powered by wind, and a large bluestone windmill was built in the 1850s for this purpose (VHR citation VHR H0311).

Other flour mills were built north of Lancefield by Abbot and Derby, at Romsey, and **Patterson's Mill north of Woodend**; the Lancefield mill was later converted into a brewery (Reid 1992:68; TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2:16; Vol 4:361). Several former flour mills are extant, including the Degraves mill in Kyneton; the Castilla mill in Kyneton and the Newham mill. Some flour mills were still in operation in the 1940s but became obsolete owing to postwar improvements in technology.

Figure 5.2 Degraves flour mill, Carlsruhe, off the Calder Highway. (Source: National Trust of Australia (Victoria) Register, B0722)

Figure 5.3 Willis' Flour Mill, Kyneton, built in 1862. (Source: Victorian Heritage Register, H2186)

Breweries and chicory mills

Other early industries established in the Macedon Ranges Shire included breweries and chicory mills. Chicory, grown in the district from the 1860s, was processed for use as a coffee substitute and additive. The Lancefield Malthouse (demolished) was built by 1870 to make malt from local barley during the harvest season. In the off season, it was converted into a chicory mill. Another chicory mill was established at Romsey in 1869 (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2:16).

The former 1890s Epic Grange Grain Store building in High Street, Lancefield, was **associated with a local brewery and malthouse on the same site. Lyons' brewery** operated at Woodend in 1865 (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 4:329; 361). Two breweries were also established at Malmsbury (Stevens 1987:59). Breweries established in Kyneton **included the Yaldwyn Street Brewery (c1857); Messrs Johnson and Cock's brewery** (c1857); Campaspe Brewery (1858); and the Shire Brewery (c1872) (McKimmie and Strauch 2021:91–93).
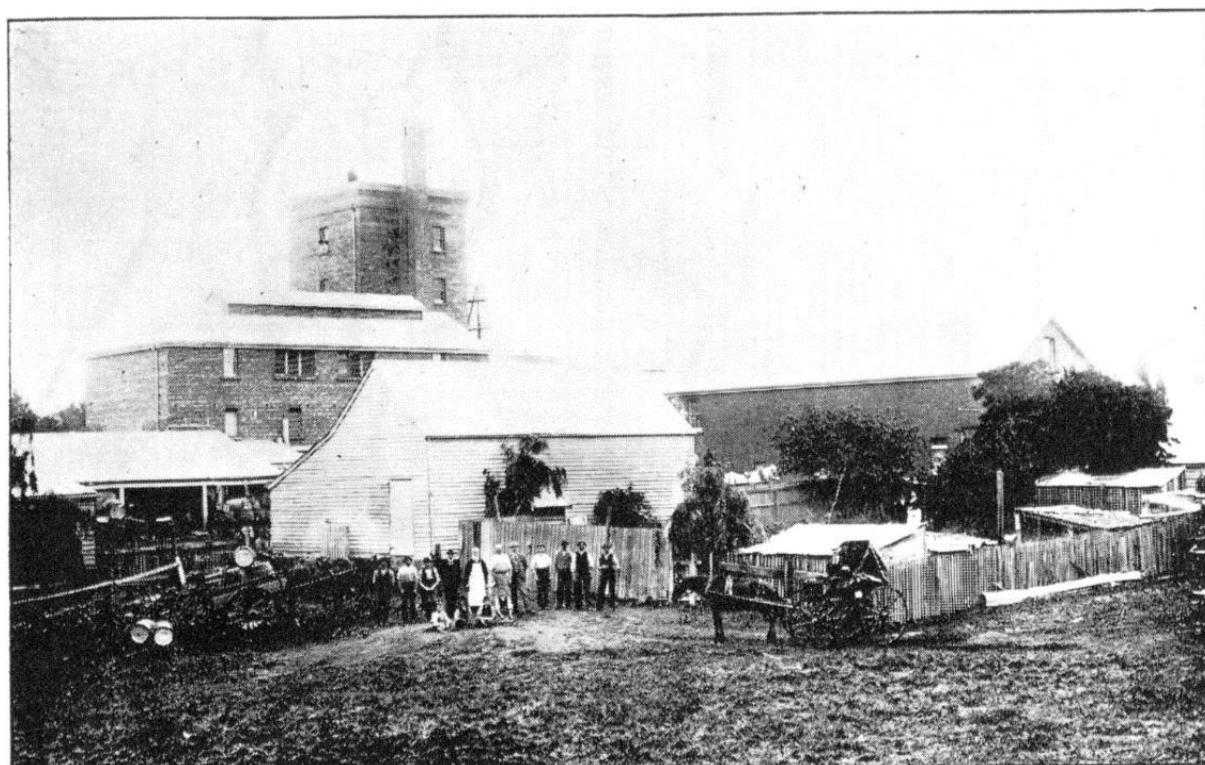
Figure 5.4 The Kyneton Brewery in Beauchamp Street, c1898. (Source: Kyneton Progress Association, *Illustrated Guide & Map to Kyneton & Surrounding Districts*, 1898)

Flax mills

The flax industry was given a boost during World War II when flax was used in the manufacture of military boots, clothing, parachute harness, cordage and canvas. After

supplies from Belgium were cut off in 1940, Britain asked Australia to supply flax fibre for its own needs and that of Australia. In July 1940 the Commonwealth Government set up a Flax Production Committee (under the Minister for Supply and Development) to arrange contracts with farmers, supply the seed, and build and operate the mills. At the request of the Commonwealth Flax Production Company, local farmers in the districts of Gisborne, Riddells Creek and Romsey began growing flax under contract with the yield in 1942 estimated to be 4000 tons. To process the flax, a flax mill was built off Sutherlands Road, Riddells Creek, in 1942 (*Kilmore Free Press,* 2 April 1942: 1). Members of the **Women's Land Army, who helped to harvest and process the flax, were accommodated in** the Beulah Hostel at Riddells Creek, **which was the former Salvation Army girls' home** (*Victorian Places* **2015). The flax factory was sold to Henderson's Federal Spring Works** Pty Ltd of North Melbourne in 1947 (*Barrier Daily Truth,* 20 Oct 1947: 1). The building housed the Henderson Mattress Factory in 1992.

Figure 5.5 **Members of the Women's Land Army outside their hostel at Riddell**s Creek in 1942. (Source: *Australasian*, 7 Nov 1942: 24)

5.2 Developing a manufacturing capacity

Manufacturing in the nineteenth century

Early manufacturing in Victoria was driven by the demand for agricultural implements and machinery, as well as goldmining equipment and machinery.

Small manufacturing operations were established in town centres to produce food and drink, notably breweries and cordial factories. One of the earliest manufacturing industries in the Shire was a factory established by Edward Cherry in 1875 in Gisborne which made butter churns from New Zealand Kauri pine (*Weekly Times*, 4 Dec 1880:10). A more unusual manufacturing operation was a straw products factory at Kyneton, which was operating in the 1880s (McIntyre and McIntyre 1942:76)

Hutcheson and Walker manufactured agricultural implements in Kyneton from a blacksmith's premises established in High Street in 1853. The business, which manufactured ploughs, harrows, wagons, drays, spring carts and reaping and cutting machines, was sold in 1872 to the Crewther brothers and Hugh Gardiner who widened the range of agricultural products. The business closed in the early 1920s (McKimmie and Strauch 2021:38–40). In 1890 there were three implement manufacturing operations in Kyneton (VMD 1890:364).

Manufacturing in the twentieth century

With the advent of World War I in 1914, skills in fabrication and machining were developed in Victoria, and in the 1920s the value of manufacturing surpassed primary production for the first time (Dingle 1984:204).

The postwar period saw significant industrial development in regional Victoria. This was aided by the government's policy of the decentralisation of industry away from Melbourne to create 'balanced development', and the encouragement by local chambers of commerce to Melbourne-based industries to establish their operations in country towns.

Gisborne

Mrs Pretty established a knitting mill in Gisborne c1919 (*Age*, 25 July 1923:13). By 1946 manufacturing in the town included a churn factory, a woollen mill and a box factory (*Victorian Places* 2015). In 1952 industrial enterprises in Gisborne included the Gisborne Case and Hardwood Timber Mills, the Lincoln Knitting Mills, and Cherry and Sons Pty Ltd (*Weekly Times*, 16 July 1952:42). By 1955 there were sawmills, a gate factory and a steel fabrication plant in operation (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2:27).

By the 1980s, manufacturing at **New** Gisborne serviced the Ford plant in Broadmeadows by making car parts.

Kyneton

The Lincoln Knitting Company was founded by T N Rowlands in c1912, and initially operated from premises in Lygon Street, East Brunswick. The Lincoln Knitting Mills established an auxiliary plant in Kyneton in 1919–20 to manufacture items of hosiery. The company purchased a former skin store in Market Street and constructed additional buildings on the site to house the factory, which opened in 1921. The mill remained a large employer until the late 1950s when it was taken over by Star Hosiery, and then by John Brown Knitting Mills in 1960. The factory closed in 2006 (McKimmie and Strauch 2021:191–196). By 1939, the Kyneton Knitting Mills, opened in 1922 as a hosiery mill, was also a part of Lincoln Mills (*Herald*, 25 March 1942:5). The knitting mill was a large employer of young women (McIntyre and McIntyre 1942:76).

Other manufacturing enterprises in Kyneton included a cordial factory, which operated from 1912.

In 1924, the Straw Products Company began the manufacture of straw envelopes for bottles and other breakable objects from its factory on the railway line at Kyneton (*Age*, 18 May 1925:18). In addition, by 1937 a fibrous-plaster factory was in operation in Kyneton (*Herald*, 16 Sept 1937:39).

From 1939 until 1959, a felt and textile factory operated from the former Kyneton market building, with Swift Tools then occupying the site from 1958 until 1975, and then A Baczynski, manufacturer of brass beds, from 1976 until 1995 (McKimmie and Strauch 2021:152).

McPherson and Co, based in Melbourne, purchased land in Beauchamp Street in 1946 to build the Ajax Pump foundry. The factory commenced operations the following year. In 1991, because of a change in ownership, the business became known as KSB, Ajax Pumps Pty Ltd. The company closed in 2001. The factory continued to be used as a foundry by various owners until 2010 (McKimmie and Strauch 2021:186–190).

By 1956, 14 factories, mills and foundries were operating in Kyneton, as well as abattoirs and a malthouse. The largest industries comprised the Kyneton District Butter and Cheese Factory, the Lincoln Kn**itting Mills, and McPherson's Ajax Pump foundry. Other enterprises included a straw products' mill and stock food manufacturer, manufacturing** engineers and toolmakers, and a boot factory (*Argus*, 29 March 1956:11).

By 1970, Kyneton's secondary industry comprised a knitting mill, foundry, six engineering and small tool works, a stock and poultry food manufacturer, joinery works, printing works, ice and freezing works, monumental masons, abattoirs, dry rendering

offal plant, butter factory, timber mills, plaster sheet manufacturer, tyre re-treading factories, and hide and skin stores (Kyneton Shire 1970:8).

The Kyneton Mineral Water bottling facility opened at Boggy Creek, near Kyneton, c1978, sourcing water from the nearby springs (McKimmie and Strauch 2021:130).

Woodend

Lincoln Mills commenced production in Woodend in 1942 in the supper room of the Woodend Mechanics' Institute. Even though a purpose-built factory was planned for in Tylden Road, the building wasn't built and the mill moved instead to the main hall of the Mechanics' Institute. When in full production, the factory employed up to 50 women, making it the major employer of women in the district. The mill closed in 1962 (Barned 1985:129).

The Nylon Spinning Factory, an extension of the same factory in Bendigo, operated at Woodend for approximately three years, closing in the 1950s (Barned 1985:133).

The government-owned Commonwealth Serum Laboratories (CSL), which was established in Melbourne in 1918, acquired land in Woodend in 1959 to operate a Field Station. Three properties, 'Roseneath', 'Chetwynd', and another portion of land, were purchased to establish a farm of 1527 acres. The Field Station manufactured and marketed biological products, including vaccines (Barned 1985:133).

In Woodend by the 1970s there were several factories that processed concreting materials and earthmoving equipment (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2:27–28). Two trailer manufacturers, Loadmaster Trailers (established c1947) and Barkers Trailers, were in operation in Woodend in 1985 (Barned 1985:133). The uniform manufacturing company, F R Timmins Pty Ltd, was the largest employer of women in Woodend in 1985 after opening c1960 (Barned 1985:133).

5.3 Marketing and retailing

Early trade

The first commercial ventures in the Macedon Ranges Shire provided for travellers on the main roads and mostly comprised inns, stores and blacksmiths. The store in Darraweit Guim survives as an example of a once significant local business that served passing traffic, and Cook's Smiddy in Monument Road, Rochford, is a rare survivor of a blacksmith's forge (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2:10, 11). From the 1860s, clusters of shops emerged along the main roads of the major town centres, including Gisborne, Kyneton, Lancefield, Malmsbury, Romsey and Woodend.

Figure 5.6 Double-storey brick shop built in Gisborne c1860. (Source: NTAV Register, B3576)

Figure 5.7 Main Street, Romsey, in 1904. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H90.140/619)

Kyneton Market

In 1878, a market building was built in Kyneton on a reserve gazetted for that purpose at the corner of Piper and Ebden streets. Possibly designed by architect Mr Pritchard, only half the building was completed (NTAV 68906). Only a few businesses, however, leased sites in the building, and by 1880 the market had closed. From 1882, the building was used for a number of other purposes. After a fire in 1995 gutted the building, it was rebuilt and today houses the business of Duck, Duck, Goose Larder (McKimmie and Strauch 2021:150-53).

Retail development

Large retail centres developed at Gisborne and Kyneton. By the 1880s and 1890s there was a large range of shops, including grocers, butchers, pharmacies, drapers, milliners, and other retailers of all kinds of goods.

Figure 5.8 W Groves, grocer, Kyneton, c1890s. (Source: *Illustrated Guide to Kyneton*, 1898)

After the opening of the railway in 1862, the business and retail centre of Kyneton moved from Piper Street to Mollison and High streets, to be closer to the railway. In the 1980s Piper Street, Kyneton, developed as a popular shopping area for antique dealers.

Figure 5.9 Sketch of Mollison Street, Kyneton, 1880. (Source: *Australasian Sketcher*, 5 June 1880: 117)

In more recent times, ABS data highlights that as of 30 June 2018 there were 3386 businesses in the Shire, with most businesses located in Gisborne and New Gisborne, and Kyneton (MRSC 2023).

5.4 Banking and finance

Commercial banks

During the goldrushes of the 1850s, a number of financial institutions emerged to serve the needs of a rapidly growing Victorian economy. The booming economy needed credit, specialist payment services, and a repository for savings. Banks in Victoria followed the British system of branch banking whereby banks expanded their operations by opening new local branches (Merrett 2008).

Within Macedon Ranges Shire, the greatest concentration of banks and insurance companies was in Kyneton, where a branch of the Bank of New South Wales was built in Piper Street in 1856, and branches of the Colonial Bank (1863) and the Bank of Victoria (1874), were both built in Mollison Street. All three were distinguished double-story buildings. In 1865, Kyneton also boasted six insurance agencies (Whitworth 1865: 214). Branches of several commercial banks opened in the Macedon Ranges Shire in the 1860s and 1870s when the district was experiencing development. New banks included the Bank of Victoria at Malmsbury in 1865. After becoming a branch of the Commercial

Banking Corporation of Sydney, it was closed in 1882. A two-storey branch of the Bank of Victoria opened in Mollison Street, Kyneton in 1875, after relocating from an earlier site in Piper Street (RNE). A branch of the Bank of New South Wales opened in 1865 in the town in a two- storey building and closed in the 1960s (Stevens 1987:53).

A branch of the Commercial Bank of Australasia opened in Woodend in 1867 (Boxshall 2017:151). The Commercial Bank opened in a two-storey building in Lancefield in 1871 (RNE). A branch of the Commercial Bank of Australasia, designed by architect William Charles Vahland, was built in Romsey in 1888. The bank operated until 1942 when it was acquired by the Shire of Romsey for use as shire offices until council amalgamation in 1995. In 2010, the original bank building and post office were combined and remodelled to house the local branch of the Goldfields Library Corporation and the Romsey Neighbourhood House (Woodhouse 2020:112, 114).

The National Bank of Australasia constructed a bank branch in Romsey in 1876 to a design by architects Terry and Oakden. It operated until 1990 when it was sold and used as a private residence (Woodhouse 2020:30).

Figure 5.10 Former Colonial Bank, Kyneton, operating as the Willow Tearooms in 1958, photographed by Colin Caldwell. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H84.276/5/33A)

Figure 5.11 Former Bank of New South Wales in Piper Street, Kyneton, photographed by John T Collins in 1963. (Source: John T Collins Collection, State Library Victoria, Accession No, H97.250/2065)

State-run banks

The Victorian Government established saving banks from the early 1850s to enable working-class people to build up modest savings. Local savings banks were built on specifically allocated government reserves, for example at Kyneton in 1875 (VGG, 1875). This developed into the State Bank, for which a new building was erected at Kyneton in 1883–1884 (NTAV B6742).

5.5 Entertaining and socialising

The early social life of the Shire was largely centred around private homes. Once a suitable community venue was available, local communities and organisations held a range of social events.

By the 1920s and 1930s, moving pictures became enormously popular and these were screened by picture showmen in many towns. Purpose-built theatres were also built, including the Paramount Theatre in Kyneton. In the 1930s, movies were also screened at the Kyneton Shire Hall, which was advertised as 'the finest country theatre' (*Age*, 25 Jan 1936:25).

In the local towns the annual agricultural shows were also important social events, and these were held in Kyneton, Gisborne and Lancefield.

Melbourne society migrated to Mount Macedon during the summer where they enjoyed tennis, golf and garden parties. From the late nineteenth century, the occupants of the big houses at Mount Macedon hosted fashionable soirees, garden parties and fetes at their properties. Lady Hodges hosted many fund-raising social events at 'Dreamthorpe' in the 1920s and 1930s (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 4:541).

5.6 Catering for tourists

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the growing middle class in Melbourne enjoyed greater leisure time, mobility and income to visit scenic places that were accessible from the city. Mount Macedon and the surrounding area was easily accessible from Melbourne by train. The combined benefits of the railway line to Kyneton and Woodend (by 1862) and the reservation of the Mount Macedon forests (in 1872) encouraged visitors. The mountain itself and the many interesting landmarks in the surrounding area, including Hanging Rock, were early tourist destinations, while the towns of Kyneton and Woodend were also popular for the recreational opportunities they provided.
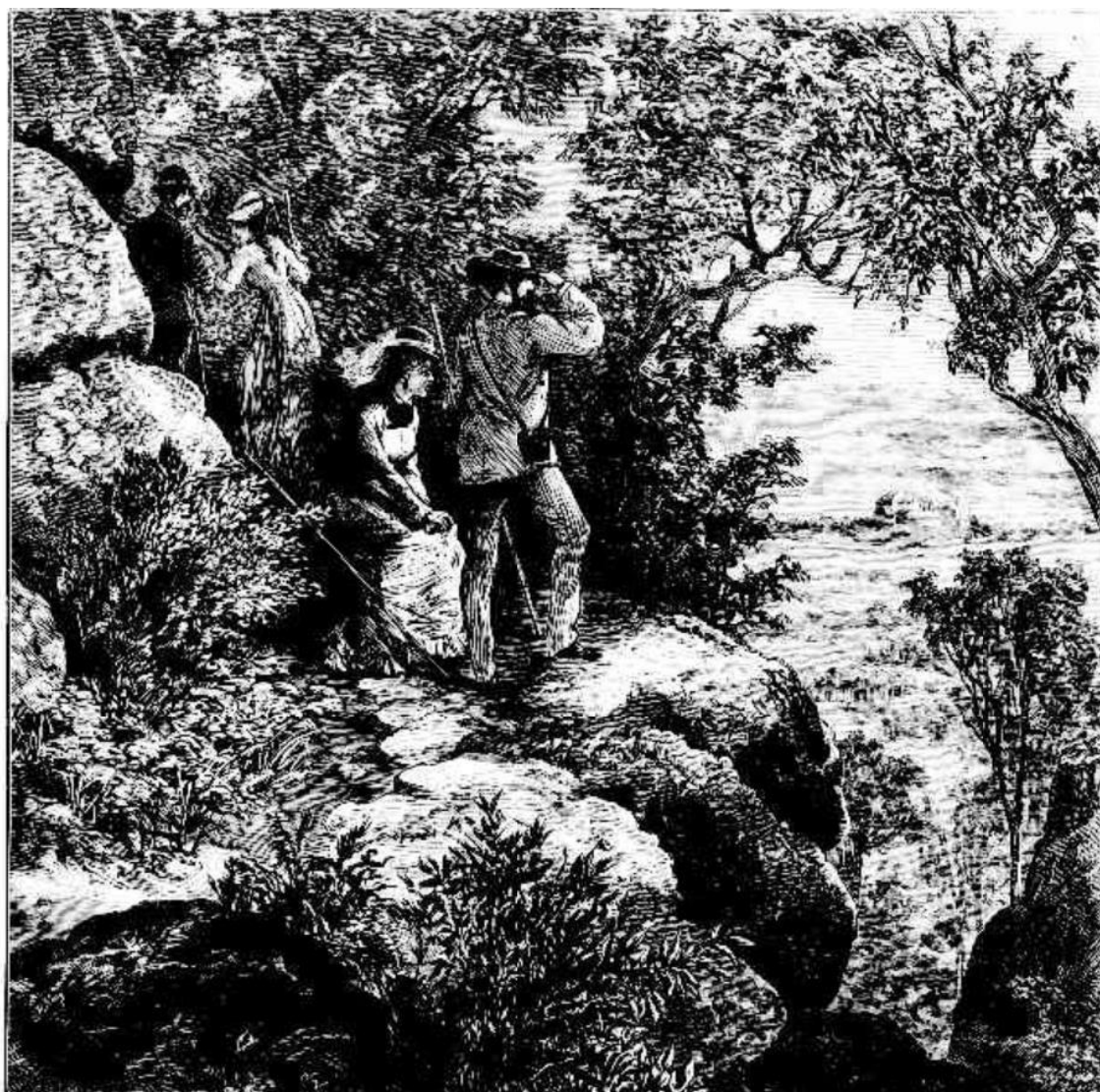
Figure 5.12 A sketch of the view from Mount Macedon, 1878, by Samuel Calvert. (Source: *Illustrated Sydney News*, 23 February 1878:8)

Anticipating a rush of tourist traffic from Melbourne, the grand Macedonia Hotel was built in Lancefield in 1889. During the 1900s Cherokee and Kerrie became popular as mountain holiday places and homes were adapted as guest houses (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 3:63). The Alpine Lodge in Cherokee, for instance, was a popular guesthouse in the 1920s (Reid 1992:144).

The Victorian Railways advertised excursion tickets to the Macedon Ranges area in the early 1900s. Mount Macedon itself was a fashionable resort, especially in the summer months.

Figure 5.13 **A tourist poster issued by the Victorian Railways in 1908, titled 'Scenes in the Midland District'. (Source: Natio**nal Library of Australia)

With the increasing popularity of the motor car in the first decades of the twentieth century, new guesthouses were opened and private residences were converted to cater for excursionists and day trippers. In the 1920s, a former hotel at Malmsbury was opened as an '**up**-to-date residential health **resort'** by Mrs Charles Fritsch, who stated in **an advertisement that the resort was near 'delightful scenery, mineral springs, [and] bathing, motorboats, fishing, all on Malmsbury Lake' (Stevens 1987:54). A number of** guesthouses were established at Mount Macedon including the former Government Cottage, which was opened as a guesthouse c1935.

Changing fashions saw a decline in visitor numbers at Mount Macedon in the postwar years. Some motels were erected and camping and caravanning facilities were provided in a number of locations, including the Kyneton Botanic Gardens.

Today, Macedon Ranges Shire features a number of popular tourist destinations, including Hanging Rock, and is renowned for its gardens and scenery. Some of the **Shire's** substantial private gardens were opened to the public as part of the **Victoria's** Open Gardens Scheme, which ran from 1987 until 2015.

Hanging Rock

When it was privately owned in 1869, the land on which Hanging Rock is located was developed for a 'pleasure resort', with a hotel built and picnics and sports meetings organised, including Highland games (G&MMDHS 2012:25). On New Year's Day 1880, the first race meeting was held to the east of Hanging Rock. In 1884 the government acquired Hanging Rock and reserved the rock and the surrounding area for recreational purposes. Local sporting facilities today include a cricket oval, tennis courts and a petanque 'pist'. Peter Weir's popular Australian film, Picnic at Hanging Rock (1975), based on the novel by Joan Lindsay (1967), increased visitor numbers at Hanging Rock in the 1970s and 1980s. The Hanging Rock Reserve continues to be a popular place for picnics and bushwalking.

Kyneton and Woodend

In 1887, Kyneton, 1750 feet above sea level, was listed in Ludwig Bruck's *Guide to Health Resorts in Australia, Tasmania and New Zealand* as one of Victoria's fifty resorts for its 'exceptionally healthy climate', especially for sufferers of consumption and nervous disorders. In 1909, the town sought to be reinstated as a mountain resort in order to attract additional railway services and access reduced fares but was unsuccessful.

Tourists interested in cycling, and later motoring, were courted instead. One attraction was the mineral spring reserve at Boggy Creek near Kyneton. The spring was not established until June 1889 when an underground reservoir was pierced in the course of bore testing for gold reefs. The mineral springs on Boggy Creek rivalled those at Daylesford (Kyneton Progress Association 1898). Here, a reserve was set aside for the benefit of visitors. A pump was installed at the site in 1890, and a rotunda, shade trees and seats were installed from 1910 (Bick 1990: 247). Later, picnic facilities were available.

Figure 5.14 Postcard image of the Kyneton Mineral Springs and rotunda. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H32492/2211)

In 1890, Braemar House, designed by the Italian-born architect Louis Boldini, was built east of Woodend for a group of Melbourne businessmen. It was envisaged as a sanitorium but instead opened as a fashionable guesthouse. The 105-room building opened in December 1890 to great fanfare. It played host to the well-known, the wealthy and the fashionable, including Dame Nellie Melba (TBA Planners 1994, Appendix 1:317). In 1918, Braemar House was acquired for use by Clyde School and became Braemar College in 1976 (Barned 1985:72).

Figure 5.15 Braemar House, Woodend, was a fashionable guesthouse, c1890–1910. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H27833)

Mount Macedon

Many prominent, wealthy Melburnians established summer residences at Mount Macedon from the 1870s onwards, attracted by the forest setting and cooler climate, which made it a fashionable holiday resort. Mount Macedon developed as a popular tourist destination with a number of guesthouses operating. This remained the case until after World War II, when many of its large allotments were subdivided. Residents of Macedon were employed as gardeners, caretakers and domestic staff for the guesthouses and large private residences on Mount Macedon (G&MMDHS 2021).

The Mount Macedon Progress Association asserted in its tourist guide of c1900 that:

> A business man can leave his office in dusty Flinders-lane or Collins-street at 4:50 p.m. and enjoy his dinner at 7:30 p.m. nearly 3,000 feet above the sea level among the loveliest of scenes and breathing the purest of air (cited in *Victorian Places* 2015)

After World War II a number of large houses were converted into guest houses. **'Ard Rudah',** for example, **established in 1874 at Mount Macedon and rebuilt in 1924 for** architect Christopher Cowper, operated as a guest house from 1956 (G&MMDHS 2009:54).

5.7 Working

Patterns of work

In the first decades of post-contact settlement in the Macedon Ranges Shire, the main areas of paid work included goldmining, agriculture, sawmilling, quarrying and general labour for major projects such as constructing the Melbourne-Bendigo section of the railway, or the Coliban Water Supply Scheme. Much of this work was itinerant or seasonal, such as shearing and timber-cutting. Skilled labour was in short supply in the 1850s as station workers and others left en masse for the goldfields. As a consequence, some pastoralists relied on Aboriginal labour.

Women's work was largely in the home, but women also worked as domestic servants, teachers, governesses, shop assistants, and publicans. Large infrastructure projects, such as railway construction and the building of the Malmsbury Reservoir in 1865, provided ongoing work for a large number of men.

The growth of manufacturing in the Shire after World War II was accompanied by an increase in factory jobs. In Macedon Ranges Shire there was postwar employment in woollen mills and knitting mills.

Unions and strikes

The importance of rural labour, mining, and timber cutting in the Shire created a strong labour movement in the Shire from the 1850s. The railway riots of 1861 which took place on the railway whilst it was under construction at Woodend and Kyneton, were an early and significant protest by workers for improved pay and conditions (*Ballarat Star*, 8 Aug 1861).

The Malmsbury Miners' Association had a strong membership in the Shire from the 1890s. It merged to become the Malmsbury, Taradale and Lauriston branch of the Amalgamated Miners' Association in 1874. The Malmsbury Miners' Association was one of 12 Victorian gold-mining unions to merge in 1874 after the strike and riots at Clunes in 1873. The Malmsbury Miners' Association was created to ensure the wages and conditions of miners in and around Malmsbury remained fair and equal after the large mining companies took over from independent miners. In 1874 there were 1832 members gathered from 12 different mining unions of the area (Federation University 2023).

Unemployment

Unemployed men were given work in the 1850s making the Mount Alexander Road (*Age*, 8 Sept 1857).

The Depression of the 1930s caused significant unemployment in Victoria, prompting many municipalities to consider the provision of unemployment relief. The State Government stepped up its relief program by providing funding for sustenance payments and for public construction projects that would utilise unemployed labour. Municipalities assisted by setting up committees to oversee relief projects and to issue sustenance payments.

A new road built at Mount Macedon in the mid-1930s, which provided access to the new memorial cross erected at the summit, was undertaken as part of an unemployment scheme.

6 Building the hamlets, villages, towns and regional cities of Macedon Ranges

6. Building the hamlets, villages, towns and regional cities of Macedon Ranges

The first settlements developed in the Macedon Ranges Shire from the late 1830s. Early settlements were located at stopping places along major transport routes or where they served a particular land-use activity, such as sawmilling or gold-mining. Settlements were consolidated and formalised as townships during the 1850s and 1860s. A greater number of government services and commercial operations were established in the larger towns. In the twentieth century, changing economic factors and altered transport routes affected the development of towns and smaller settlements, and often led to decline.

6.1 Living in country towns

Many of the early settlements in the Macedon Ranges Shire developed on major transport routes, including Kyneton, Woodend, Gisborne and Malmsbury. They originated as stopping places on stock routes and along the roads to the gold diggings, where roadside inns were established, and where stock could be watered and rested (Bick 1990:225). Settlements were also often established at river and creek crossings.

Agricultural settlements

Baynton, Bolinda, Edgecombe, Monegeetta, Pastoria East, Pipers Creek, and Sidonia all developed as agricultural rural hamlets and/or postal townships.

A post office opened at Bolinda in 1879 and at Monegeetta in 1911. A general store also operated at Monegeetta and a school opened at Bolinda in 1870. A mechanics' institute hall opened in Bolinda in 1913 (*Victorian Places* 2015). Although of similar population initially - 129 in 2011 for Bolinda, and 134 in 1921 for Monegeetta - both hamlets have developed different population patterns, with Bolinda hlaving to 53 people in 1961 and Monegeetta doubling to 321 in 2011 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Three schools opened briefly at Baynton in the 1870s when its population was 307. In 1903, Baynton was described as a postal village with a population of about 100. Two state schools, a Presbyterian church and creamery were in operation in this year. The Baynton East school re-opened in 1925 and closed in 1949. A hall was built in 1962 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Establishing towns and villages along major transport routes

Carlsruhe

Until the establishment of Kyneton in 1849, Carlsruhe was the district's centre of settlement with an armed regiment in 1838-39 (*Victorian Places* 2015). A hotel opened in 1846 (*Victorian Places* 2015). A site for the village of Carlsruhe, situated near the former Carlsruhe Inn and camping ground, was reserved in 1851 when most of the surrounding land had been taken up as agricultural allotments (Bick 1990:247).

A flour mill was established in 1859 and a railway station was opened at Carlsruhe in 1862 as part of the construction of the Melbourne–Bendigo section of the Melbourne to Murray River railway line.

During the 1860s there were two hotels and, from 1871, a Common School. The Presbyterian church was rebuilt in stone in 1872–73, while the Church of England held services in a temporary building. A new brick state school was built in 1893 (Bick 1990:247). A branch railway line to Daylesford opened in 1880. In 1903, Carlsruhe's population was 150 (*Victorian Places* 2015). In 1910, 91 farmers were listed in the district and there was a central creamery. There was a post office at the Carlsruhe Hotel and another was at the Carlsruhe Railway Station (Bick 1990:247).

Gisborne

The Travellers' Rest Hotel, opened in 1840, changed its name to the Bush Inn and became the site for the township of Gisborne, officially surveyed and named in 1851 by Robert Hoddle in memory of Henry Fyshe Gisborne, a former Commissioner of Crown Lands (G&MMDHS 2021). Both the Travellers Rest Hotel and the Mount Macedon Hotel, later known as Macedon House, helped to establish Gisborne. The importance of the township was secured after the Sunbury–Woodend section of the Melbourne and Murray River railway line opened just north of Gisborne in 1861 to create the township of New Gisborne.

In 1865 Gisborne comprised a court of petty sessions, a mechanics' institute, a masonic hall, a racecourse, an agricultural society, a flour mill and four hotels (*Victorian Places* 2015).

In 1903, the township, which had a population of 600, was described as having four hotels, a branch of the Commercial Bank, a mechanics' institute, a state school, a Catholic school, four churches, butter factories, a eucalyptus oil factory and a churn factory (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Figure 6.1 **The road into Gisborne, photographed by Nicholas O'Donnell in 1899. (Source:** Museums Victoria, Item MM 4328)

In 1970 the Tullamarine Freeway was opened, putting Gisborne within commuting distance of outer metropolitan Melbourne. The **town's** population subsequently tripled from 1286 people in 1976 to 3758 in 1996 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Kyneton

Kyneton was founded in 1848 dur**ing a visit to Wedge's Flat by Superintendent C J La** Trobe, who was accompanied by squatters Edward Jeffreys, W H Mitchell and J T **Bennett. The Jeffreys Bros had taken up the 'Five Mile Creek' run in 1841 but changed** the name of the run to '**Kyneton'** after the village of **Kington (pronounced 'Kineton') on** the Welsh border, which was close to the estate owned by the Jeffreys family (Randell 1982:19). The district was also originally referred to as Mount Macedon. The Kyneton township was surveyed by Robert Hoddle around the site of **Wedge's** camp site in 1849 and the sale of allotments commenced in 1850 (Bick 1990:225, 227).

The gold rushes to Bendigo and Forest Creek saw Kyneton develop as an important stopping point. The gold rush also brought an influx of people to Kyneton. By the late 1850s, Kyneton had a wide range of civic and religious buildings, many of them which were built from local bluestone. This included the Anglican church (1852, rebuilt 1856); Congregational church (1853, rebuilt 1860); m**echanics'** institute (1854, rebuilt 1897); Methodist church (1854), Catholic church and (1855); National School (1856); Presbyterian church (1857); and hospital (1857).

An agricultural society was formed at Kyneton in 1856. Several large flour mills operated, including the Argyle steam mill (1857), the Degraves mill west of Kyneton (1857), and a mill at the corner of Ebden and Piper streets (1862). Another mill at the corner of Wedge and Piper streets operated until 1891 and was subsequently adapted for use as a butter and cheese factory, which operated until 1974 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Figure 6.2 Sketch by S T Gill, titled *Kyneton Looking towards the Bridge*, 1857. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. 30328102131660/6)

The development of Kyneton progressed steadily following the completion in 1862 of the Woodend–Kyneton section of the Melbourne and Murray River Railway, which passed **close to the township. By 1903, Kyneton's population had reached 3371 and the** township, which was described as 'well built and laid out', featured several substantial buildings. Its manufacturing base comprised a brewery, two malt houses, four implement factories and three coach factories (*Victorian Places* 2015).
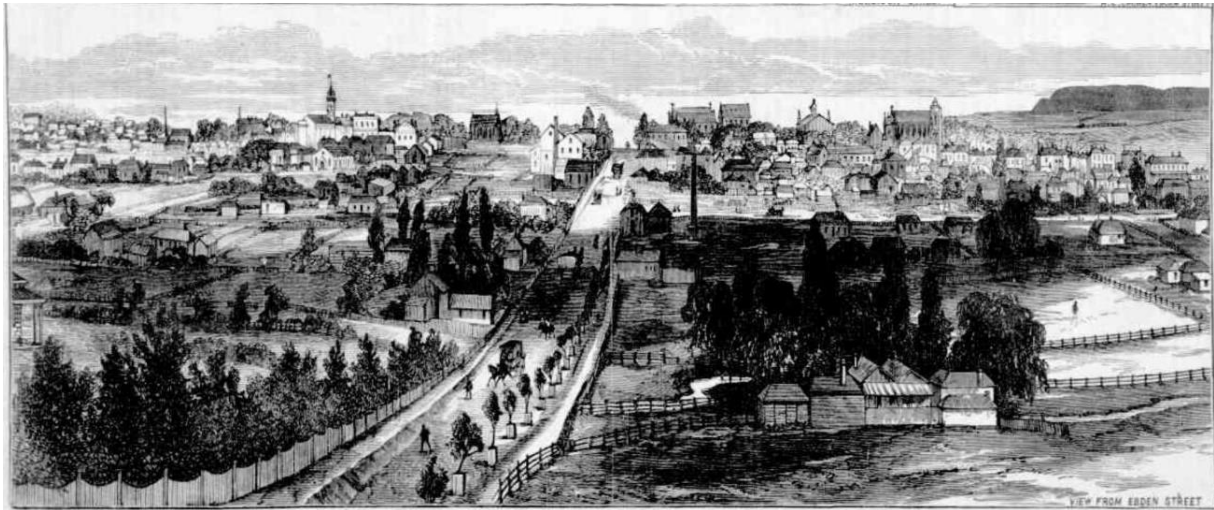
Figure 6.3 View from Ebden Street, Kyneton, 1880. (Source: *Australian Sketcher*, 5 June 1880, p. 117)

An early government high school opened in 1902 in the former market building, and a technical school opened in 1906. A new government high school was built in 1927. The Catholic Church operated primary and secondary schools (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Encouraged by the Kyneton saleyards (1860), a number of stock and station agents were established in the town. In the twentieth century, industrial operations included the Lincoln hosiery mill, an envelope factory (1930s) and a fibro-sheet factory (1950s). McPherson's Ajax pump foundry opened in 1947 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

From 1901 to 1954, Kyneton maintained a population of approximately 3200. This had increased to 3492 by 1971, and to 3940 by 1991 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Lancefield

Lancefield was established near a ford used by travellers to cross the headwaters of the Deep Creek. This area was used as a camping ground for stock from the late 1830s. A hotel and store had opened here by 1859. Lancefield developed as a town because of its use as a stopover for the gold traffic to the Bendigo and McIvor goldfields in the early 1850s.

Between 1865 and the mid-1870s a number of civic and church buildings were established in Lancefield, including a Common school (1865), Anglican church (1868), Presbyterian church (1876) and Catholic church (1873), and Mechanics' Institute (1877). A branch line from Lancefield Road (Clarkefield) to Lancefield was opened in 1881, a Catholic school was begun in 1885 and a water trust was formed in the 1880s (*Victorian Places* 2015).

After the opening of the railway line in 1881, the town entered a boom period and became a popular summer resort for Melburnians (MRSC 2023). A number of hotels were built, including the three-storey Macedonia Hotel in 1889 (*Victorian Places* 2015).
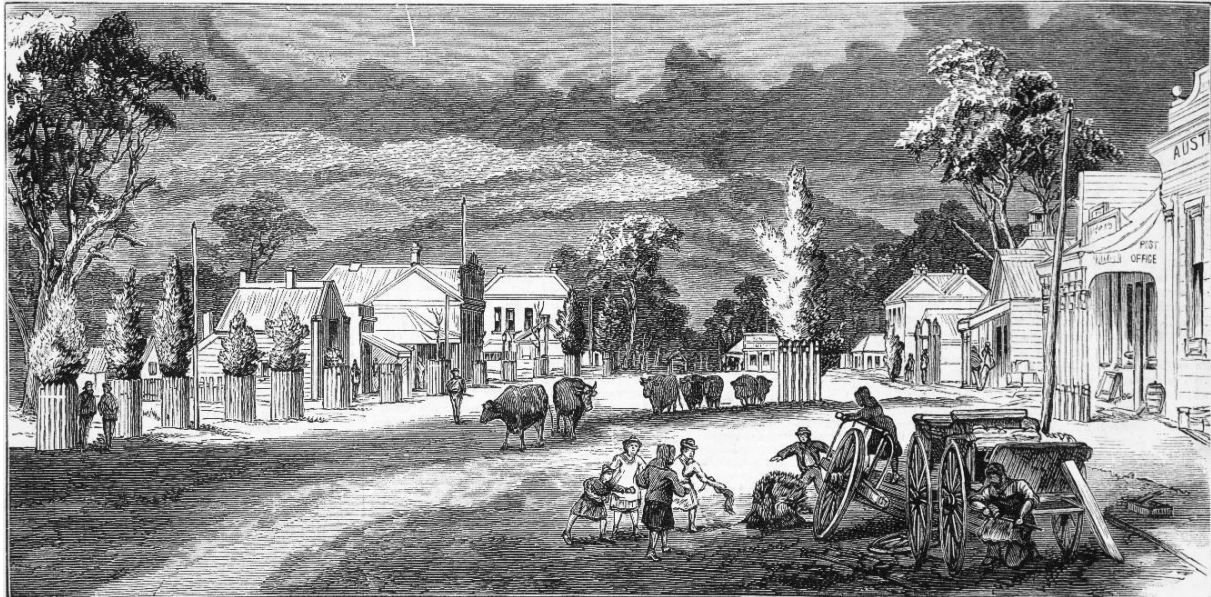
Figure 6.4 A sketch of the road into Lancefield, 1881. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. IAN29/06/81/124b)

Lancefield's population was 450 in 1887 and by that time, the town supported five hotels, two bank agencies, a public library, recreation reserves and sports clubs. A second railway line from Kilmore was opened in 1892, but this closed in 1904. In 1903, **Lancefield's** population had reached 500 and by 1911 it was 845 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

In 1971, Lancefield recorded its lowest population for the twentieth century at 454. Twenty years later, however, this had more than doubled to 1063 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Macedon

After the discovery of gold in the early 1850s at Forest Creek (Castlemaine) and Bendigo, businesses opened at Middle Gully (Macedon) to supply provisions for travellers who were heading north through the Black Forest. Sawmill workers who worked in the forests of Mount Macedon also took up residence at Middle Gully in slab huts. The settlement was surveyed as Macedon and proclaimed in 1860, although the names Middle Gully and Lower Macedon remained in use until the Middle Gully Railway Station was renamed Macedon Railway Station in 1870 (Burns 2002:12,13). A denominational school was established in 1869 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Further development occurred when Middle Creek was included on the route of the Melbourne-Bendigo section of the Melbourne and Murray River railway line. The section between Sunbury and Woodend, including a station at Middle Gully, opened in 1861.

The Victorian Government established a state nursery near Middle Gully Creek in 1872 for the propagation of forest trees. Further north, a co-operative settlement established by the government, was established in the 1890s. Known as the Macedon Village Settlement, it consisted of several small farms and had its own school, which operated until 1918 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

By 1903, when **Macedon's population was 363, the township comprised three hotels,** two general stores, a state school, three churches, a hall, library and the State Nursery. Several eucalyptus oil works operated in the area (*Victorian Places* 2015).

The railway at Macedon transported horticultural produce to Melbourne and was the stopping-off point for visitors accessing resort facilities on Mount Macedon. The town was a source of labour for the upkeep of the substantial houses and grounds established on the mountain (*Victorian Places* 2015).

In 1970 the Tullamarine Freeway was opened, putting Macedon within easier commuting distance of outer metropolitan Melbourne. Subsequently, the population almost doubled: from 748 in 1976 to 1257 in 1996 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Malmsbury

Malmsbury was founded as a crossing place on the Coliban River. Spanned by a timber bridge built in 1849, Malmsbury was proclaimed a township on 26 January 1852 (Bick 1990: 249, Stevens 1987: 5–7). Malmsbury grew rapidly in the 1850s because it was on the road to the Bendigo diggings and because of the construction of the new railway.

Malmsbury's existence, however, depended not so much on gold as on farming and bluestone quarrying, which in turn made it an important loading station for the construction of the Kyneton-Castlemaine section of the Melbourne and Murray River railway line, which opened in 1862. By 1887, **Malmsbury's 'famed** bluestone **quarry'** had been in production for more than twenty years (Bick 1990: 249).

Malmsbury's population was 830 in 1861 and 1357 in 1871 and remained around that figure for the remainder of the century. By 1865, there was a brewery and a steam flour **mill, Degraves'** Riverview Mill, which operated on the Mount Alexander Road. A wind-powered flour mill on the Coliban River, also operated briefly in the 1860s (Bick 1990: 249).

In 1865, Malmsbury's residents, which numbered 1000, were served by a town hall, a post office, six hotels, a racecourse, a **mechanics'** institute, four churches, a recreation ground, and botanic gardens that included a lake with an island. A new state school was built 1873–74. In 1893, six of the **town's** 10 hotels were closed in a local option vote. In

December 1895, **the flour mill plant and buildings were sold. By 1903, Malmsbury's**
population had reached 1221 (Bick 1990:249; *Victorian Places* 2015).

Figure 6.5 Township of Malmsbury, c1898. (Source: *Illustrated Guide and Map to Kyneton and surrounding district*, 1898)

Between 1900 and 1950, the population fell from over 1000 to around 300 (Victorian Places 2015). The Catholic school (established in 1856) closed in the 1940s.

In 1970, Malmsbury's population was 500. By this time, the Malmsbury Youth Training Centre had opened and a sawmill was in operation (Kyneton Shire 1970:11).

In 2008 Malmsbury was bypassed by the Calder Freeway. In **2011, Malmsbury's** population was 612 (Victorian Places 2015).

Romsey

Romsey was first known as Five Mile Creek (a tributary of Deep Creek) and was a camping ground by the late 1830s for stock and drovers. Further development occurred when Romsey was used from the early 1850s as a stopover by the gold traffic to the Bendigo and McIvor goldfields. A hotel was built and a post office was opened in the hotel in 1858 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Romsey was gazetted as a town in 1861 (*VGG*, 25 Feb 1861:401). A school opened c1858 and another school site was in use in 1865. Presbyterian and Anglican churches were opened in 1865 and 1871 respectively, and a **mechanics'** institute was opened in 1875 (*Victorian Places* 2015).
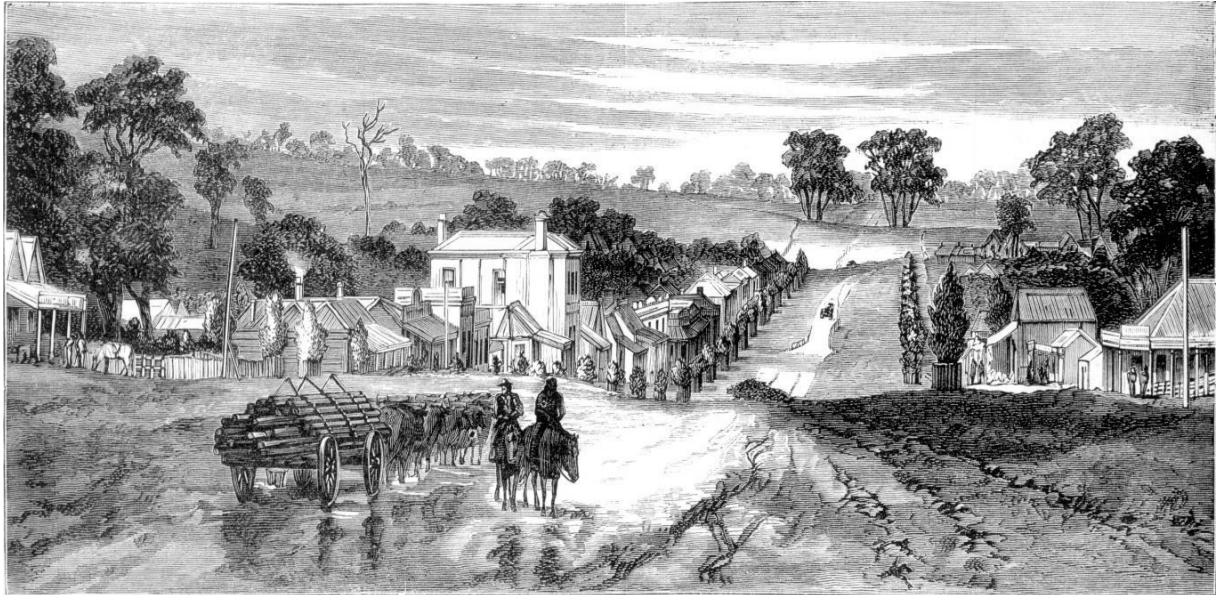
Figure 6.6 The road into Romsey, 1881. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. IAN29/06/81/124a)

In 1903, Romsey's population of 600 was served by a post office, three banks, a state school, four churches, a **mechanics'** institute, lodges, sport clubs and six hotels. A large milk-preserving factory operated in the township at this time (*Victorian Places* 2015).

The construction of the Tullamarine Freeway in 1970 put Romsey within closer reach of metropolitan Melbourne. Rural/residential and residential subdivisions subsequently **occurred and continued throughout the next decades. Over this period, Romsey's** population increased from 484 in 1971, to 2033 in 1991, to 3678 in 2011 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Woodend

Woodend was first established as a crossing point on the Five Mile Creek and was originally known by that name. A bridge across the creek opened in 1849 and in 1851 the settlement was officially named Woodend on the Five Mile Creek (Boxshall 2017:32). From the early 1850s, the settlement was a stopover for diggers on their way to the goldfields at Bendigo and Forest Creek (Castlemaine).

The Woodend township was proclaimed in 1861 (Barned 1985:10). A National school opened in 1855, along with Presbyterian (1859), Free Presbyterian (1860) and Catholic (1861) schools. An Anglican church was established in 1859 and a Wesleyan chapel in **1860. A court of petty sessions and a mechanics' institute w**ere established in 1862 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Further development occurred when a railway station was established at Woodend in 1861 on the Sunbury-Woodend section of the Melbourne and Murray River railway line, which opened the same year.

By 1875, at which time Woodend's population was 1510, the township comprised several bank agencies, a mechanics' institute, two churches and eight hotels. From the 1880s, Woodend became a popular tourist destination and several guesthouses were opened. By 1903, the township's population had decreased to 1000 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Figure 6.7 Detail from a photograph of Woodend, c1930, showing the centre of town in High Street, the memorial clock tower and horse trough. (Source: State Library Victoria, Record ID 9937678623607636)

Woodend experienced a level of decline in the mid twentieth century. After the opening of the Tullamarine Freeway in 1970, which placed Woodend within closer reach of metropolitan Melbourne, the town experienced strong growth. Woodend's population increased from 1290 in 1971, to 2743 in 1991, to 3415 in 2011 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Gold-mining settlements

Lauriston

Mining commenced in the Taradale Mining Division in 1851 with the discovery of shallow alluvial gold along the Coliban River near Lauriston. By 1865, there were five proven reefs east of the river and two on the west, while as many alluvial companies were also at work. Three steam-driven quartz crushers and four puddling machines had been installed, fuelled by timber cut on site (TBA Planners Vol 2: 252). By 1890, there were around 20 mining companies active in the area and mining plant valued at £6000 had been erected (VMD 1890: 365)

The Kent Hotel and general store, built in 1861, was one of three licensed premises in Lauriston in 1865. Presbyterian, Catholic and government schools were opened 1863–65 (*Victorian Places* 2015). The 'Lauriston Village' was formally proclaimed in 1875 (*VGG*, 29 Oct 1875: 2049).

In 1903, the Lauriston township, with a population within a mile's radius of 550, comprised three churches, a state school, Catholic school, two halls, a general store and three hotels (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Farming, mining and a little quarrying kept the population level stable at several hundred until about 1920. In 1910, there were three hotels, a post office, police station, store and butchery, a fellmongery, a state school, and a Catholic church-school, opened in 1892.

The Anglican Church of All Saints opened in June 1873; it closed by 1910 but reopened in 1931. In 1932 the Misses Stringer built and donated 'Woodmount' as a community hall (Bick 1990:252).

Many of Lauriston's buildings were removed and relocated or demolished when mining ceased in the district c1911 (Bick 1990:848, 850). Lauriston's peak population of 517 in 1911 had decreased to 79 by 1961 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Railway townships

Clarkefield

Named after prominent local land-holder W J T Clarke, the Clarkefield Hotel and stables date from 1857. A railway station opened at Lancefield Road in 1861 as part of the construction of the Melbourne-Bendigo section of the Melbourne and Murray River railway line. A post office opened in 1862. In 1881, the station became a junction for the railway line to Lancefield. The name of the railway station and post office changed to Lancefield Junction in 1881 and to Clarkefield in 1926. A state school opened in 1890 and closed in 2016. In 1933, Clarkefield's population was 199 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

New Gisborne

New Gisborne was established when the Melbourne–Bendigo section of the Melbourne and Murray River railway line was built north of Gisborne in 1861. By 1903, the township had a population of 200, which supported four hotels, a free library, and a state school (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Since 1970, when the Tullamarine Freeway was opened, New Gisborne has been within commuting distance of metropolitan Melbourne. Its residential population doubled from 228 in 1976 to 456 in 1996, and quadrupled to 1766 people by 2006 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Riddells Creek

A railway station, used to transport mainly timber cut from the district, opened at Riddells Creek in 1861 as part of the construction of the Melbourne–Bendigo section of the Melbourne to Murray River railway line. The first settlement at Riddells Creek

comprised railway workers and their families. Riddells Creek subsequently developed as a service centre to its agricultural hinterland (*Victorian Places* 2015).

By 1903, the township, with a population of approximately 600, comprised two hotels, a State school, a Catholic school, three churches, several stores, an oatmeal mill, a **mechanics' institute, recreation reserve, racecourse and nursery. A flax mill opened at** Riddells Creek in 1942 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Riddells Creek experienced strong growth following the opening of the Tullamarine Freeway in 1970 and the development of Sunbury as a satellite town of Melbourne. The population of Riddells Creek increased from 478 in 1976, to 1216 in 1996, and to 2976 in 2011 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Trentham East

Early settlers in the area in the 1840s-50s, who were predominately Irish settlers recognised the suitability of the rich volcanic soil of Trentham East for growing potatoes (TDHS). From 1880, the Daylesford railway line allowed wider distribution of the **district's** produce and a settlement developed at Trentham East (Bick 1990:257). It remained a highly productive potato producing area into the 1980s (TDHS).

Sawmilling settlements

Cherokee, Hesket and Kerrie

Other settlements at Cherokee, Hesket and Kerrie were established in the 1860s to provide services to sawmillers in the area. Timber mills were in operation by 1865 and a school had opened at Cherokee by that year. During the 1900s, Cherokee and Kerrie became popular as mountain holiday places and homes were converted to guest houses (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 3:63). It had a school which operated until 1994, but the building was also used as a post office, a church and a Sunday school (Barned 1983:30-31).

Spring Hill

Although some goldmining occurred in this area, Spring Hill was settled primarily as a sawmilling centre in the early 1860s. The settlement was centred around the Bullarook and Spring Hill Farmers Common, which was established in 1864. Six sawmills were at work by 1865. The Spring Hill Hotel catered for about 200 people within a radius of two miles. By 1910 a post office, store and bakery were the only signs of commerce and were run by the Knight family, who had opened the hotel-store.

A Common school had opened for a few years in the 1860s to be succeeded by a Catholic church–school (Bick 1990:252).

Tourist townships

Mount Macedon

Mount Macedon—also known as Upper Macedon—attracted prominent members of Melbourne Society from the early 1870s when the government released large blocks for sale on the southern side of the mountain. As a result, many grand homes with extensive ornamental gardens were established as summer residences.

At the peak of the resort's popularity in the 1890s, some of these residences were converted to guesthouses. A major legacy of the era was the establishment, around these mansions, of extensive ornamental gardens, many of which are still in existence today (MRSC 2023). The memorial cross, erected in 1936, became an attraction for visitors. Its residential population doubled from 676 in 1996 to 1321 in 2011 (*Victorian Places* 2015).

6.2 Making homes in Macedon Ranges Shire

The construction of houses in the municipality has been shaped by population shifts; the availability of resources, building materials and building skills; and the establishment of supporting services and infrastructure. In the townships of the Shire, residential development has traditionally comprised single dwellings on individual allotments.

Homesteads and farmhouses

As a result of the Order-in-Council of 1847 that provided an option for freehold acquisition of the 'homestead block', pastoralists began to build improved living quarters. Originally, homesteads were modest, like 'Elderslie' and 'Wooling', but increased prosperity generated by the wool boom of the 1870s led to the building of larger homesteads. Materials for the construction of these homesteads was frequently sourced from the site, or nearby. An example includes 'Eden Park', where the bluestone was sourced from across the road (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 4:749). These more elaborate homesteads, often in bluestone, were generally set in large grounds, with landscaped gardens. Examples include 'Gisborne Park' and 'Pastoria'.

Figure 6.8 'Elderslie' homestead, New Gisborne. (Source: NTAV Register, B1652)

Figure 6.9 The Robertson family's 'Wooling' estate, at New Gisborne, showing the homestead and out-buildings, with Mount Macedon visible in the distance. (Source: Robertson Descendants' Day blogpost, 2012)

Figure 6.10 **The homestead at 'Gisborne Park'**, Gisborne. (Source: NTAV Register, B6043)

Figure 6.11 **'Pastoria' homestead**, Pastoria, built in the 1890s. (Source: VHR citation H1179)

Homesteads were working complexes and usually had live-in servants who were accommodated in **servants'** quarters. The service area was typically located at the rear of the homestead and included the kitchen, the washhouse, the meat houses, the coolroom and various stores. The distinction between the homestead and servant**s'** areas at **'Bolinda Vale'** can be seen in the images below.

Figure 6.12 'Bolinda Vale' homestead, Bolinda, in the 1960s. (Source: NTAV Register, B0975)

Figure 6.13 Sketch of the **servants' area** at Bolinda Vale, showing water pump and appearing to depict Chinese workers. (Source: PROV)

Dwellings built on smaller freehold holdings were generally referred to as farmhouses rather than homesteads. The first farmhouses were built in the early period of agricultural development in the Shire, from the 1859s, which pre-dated the selection acts. Early farmhouses were relatively rudimentary timber-framed structures, clad in timber (either milled or slabs) and with a shingle or iron roof. Due to a shortage of materials during the goldrush, materials were often in short supply. Farmers Sidney and Elizabeth Seymour used a series of prefabricated door panels from Singapore to clad their farmhouse in Romsey, built c1856 (VHR H2268).

Accommodation for rural workers

The majority of dwellings built in the early colonial period of the late 1830s and 1840s were rudimentary structures of timber erected on pastoral leaseholds. Few of these structures have survived. A drop-log cottage from this period, built on The Den (**'Theaden'**) run in the 1840s, was relocated to the site of the Kyneton Museum in 1969 (Boxshall 2017:28).

With pastoral settlement made more permanent from **1847, more substantial workers'** housing was provided on pastoral stations. While living quarters for rural workers was **typically referred to as 'men's huts', these were often solidly built and substantial**

structures. At W J T Clarke's 'Bolinda Vale' station, for example, there was accommodation provided for 48 shearers in the 1870s (*Australasian*, 26 Feb 1876:23).

Houses in country towns

In the 1840s and 1850s, during the early pastoral period and then the years of the gold rush, residences in the burgeoning settlements, and along the roads to the goldfields, were often temporary, modest structures. They included tents, with more permanent structures built from local materials, such as bark, wattle-and-daub, timber slabs, local bricks, and stone. Homes from this era survive today. For example, Francis and Charity Hocking's cottage in Urquhart Street, Woodend, is a relatively rare survivor of a once common building form (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2:10).

The bulk of housing in the mid to late nineteenth century tended to be built in the common vernacular style: a rectilinear-form cottage with a gabled roof. The houses were typically two rooms across with a central hallway.

As people gained more stable employment, the 1860s saw settlements become more permanent. Towns that were on the Melbourne–Bendigo section of the Melbourne and Murray River railway line, which opened 1861–62, began to take shape.
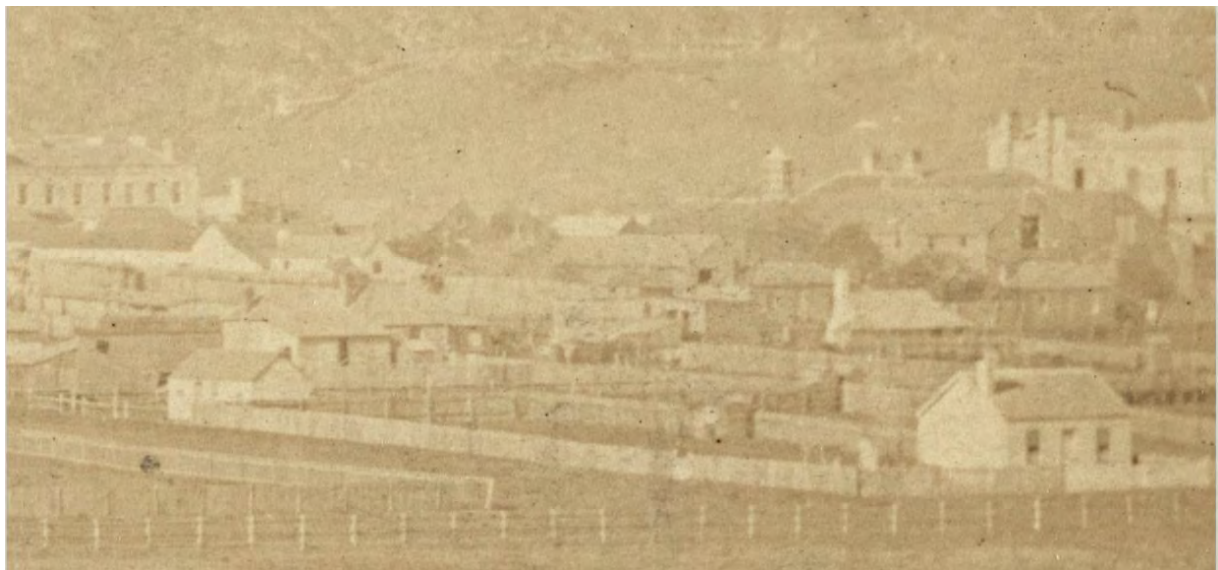
Figure 6.14 A view of Kyneton, dated 1861, showing early dwellings. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H1950)

During the construction period, railway workers were accommodated in tents in camps. Some residents in Malmsbury built houses to provide better accommodation for railway workers in that area (MHS 2023). Over this period, local residents, including miners, general labourers, shop keepers, tradespeople and farm labourers, often lived in more substantial homes made of milled timber, or when available, brick. Quarry workers often built their own homes and houses for others from locally sourced stone. Surviving

cottages that date from the 1860s can be seen at 163 Main Road, Riddells Creek; 251A Station Street, New Gisborne; and 111 Saunders Road, New Gisborne.

Figure 6.15 Victorian-era timber cottage, Riddells Creek, 1994. (Source: Graeme Butler, via Flickr)

With the buoyant economic conditions of the 1880s and the construction of new railway lines from Lancefield Road (Clarkefield) to Lancefield in 1881 and from Daylesford to Carlsruhe in 1879–80, further residential growth occurred in Macedon Ranges Shire. This era saw more ornate homes built of weatherboard and brick, some of which were architect-designed.

Figure 6.16 Dr Shields' Victorian-era residence, Malmsbury, [nd]. (Source: PROV)

Due to the economic depression of the 1890s, little building occurred in Macedon Ranges Shire until the end of the decade. Residential building resumed in the early 1900s and was particularly strong during the boom years of the 1920s. This era saw a number of local farmers, who had taken up land in the 1860s and 1870s, move into town to retire.

The Californian Bungalow style became popular in the 1920s, era period that also saw the increasing provision of services to townships. Roads and water supplies to houses were improved, and telephone services were made available from the early 1900s.
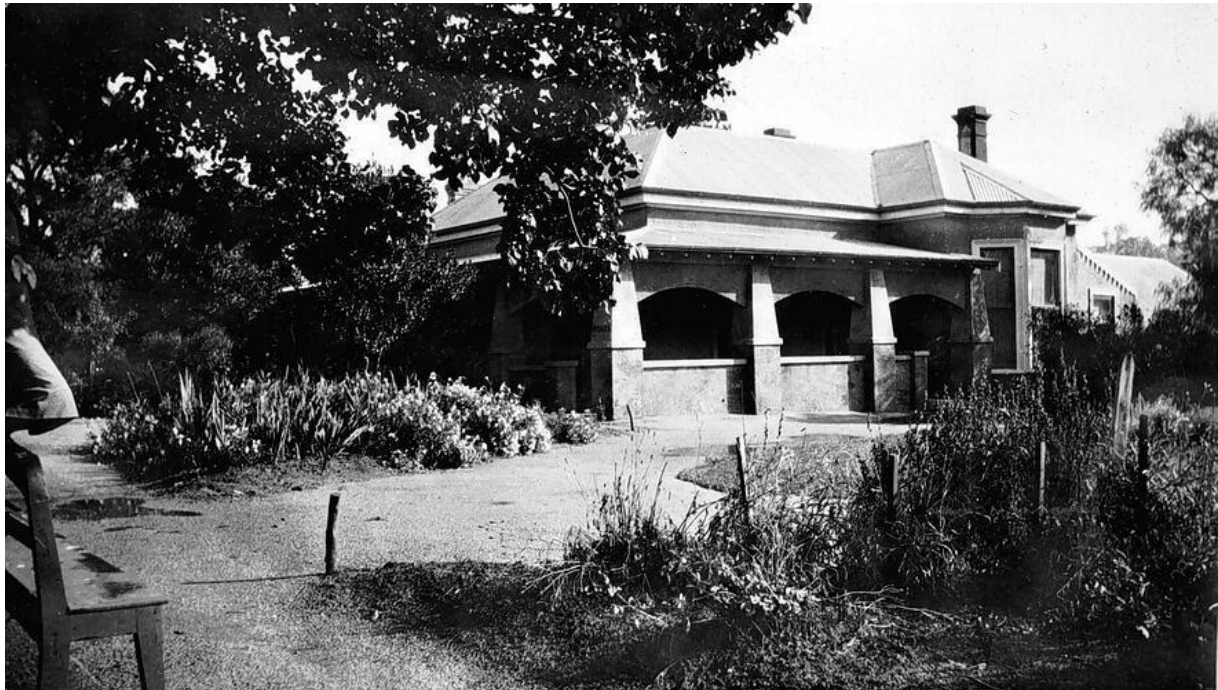
Figure 6.17 Brick house built in Kyneton, 1928. (Source: Museums Victoria, item MM 8910).

Little building occurred during the Depression of the early 1930s and the subsequent period of World War II, 1939–45. Building began again following World War II. Some private building was initiated by retired farmers moving into townships after the good seasons and high prices of the 1950s and 1960s. Much of this building was in weatherboard, but brick veneer construction was also popular. Two innovative designs from this period can be seen in Kyneton: at 25 Orr Street, and 24 Sturt Street (Bick 1990:153).

Postwar housing for low-income families was built in the Shire by the Housing Commission of Victoria, which was founded in 1938. The provisions of the *Housing Act 1943* allowed for the acquisition of sites for the establishment of large-scale housing estates that provided accommodation for low-income families. In 1947, the Housing Commission built 15 timber houses in Kyneton, along Victoria Street between Beauchamp Street and Bowen Street (Bick 1990:209; McKimmie and Strauch 2021:187). This development was likely linked to the Ajax Pump foundry built in Beauchamp Street in 1946. At least 10 timber houses were built by the Housing Commission at Gisborne in 1947 (*Construction*, 23 April 1947:6). By 1970, the Housing Commission had built a 35-unit estate at Kyneton (Shire of Kyneton 1970:5).

From the 1970s onwards, many townships in the Macedon Ranges Shire were within commuting distance of outer metropolitan Melbourne. As a result, the population of some districts increased significantly over the ensuing decades, and the farmland was

subdivided to enable residential development. In addition, the subdivision of township blocks has also taken place, with the building of a second dwelling or units occurring.

Retreats and summer residences

Since the mid-nineteenth century, the scenic beauty of the Macedon Ranges Shire has made it a popular place of retreat for people from Melbourne and elsewhere. Many grand homes were built as summer residences for the wealthy and country homes have also been built by and for those seeking a country retreat. An early example is 'Skelsmergh House' at Kyneton, built in 1859 by pastoralist William Degraves as his summer residence (VHR H1166).

Figure 6.18 'Skelsmergh House', Kyneton, built in 1859. (Source: VHR citation H1166)

Some wealthy Melburnians who had profited from the city's land boom in the 1880s built a country villa in the Shire, which they could access by rail. Most of these homes were architect designed. A number of these houses survive, such as 'Mintaro', which was built in 1880 for Captain Robert Gardiner. Another was 'Dromkeen', built for Judge Arthur Chomley in 1889 at Riddells Creek to a design by Hyndman and Bates.

Figure 6.19 'Mintaro', Monegeetta, built in 1880–81. (Source: VHR citation H2317)

Figure 6.20 'Dromkeen', Riddells Creek built in 1889 to a design by Hyndman and Bates, for Judge Arthur Chomley. (Source: NTAV Register, B5677)

Other areas of the **Shire have also attracted those seeking a country residence. 'Ettrick Bank' near Mount Aitken, for instance, became the home** of future Federal treasurer, Jim Cairns, after World War I (Butler 2009:132). **'Flint Hill' was built in Woodend for** Melbourne businessman Harold Brookes and his wife Dorothy in 1922, with the garden planted in the 1930s (Davies 2019:40). A later example is the country house of Alban Henry Wills, built 1923–24 to a design of Walter Burley Griffin, according to his Knitlock system of building (VHR, citation H1221).

Figure 6.21 Wills House, Kyneton, built in 1923–24 to a design by Walter Burley Griffin. (Source: NTAV Register, B4673)

In the 1960s and 1970s, many Melbourne residents took advantage of low property prices to buy up properties in area to adapt as holiday homes and hobby farms. There **was interest at this time in buying old buildings and restoring them; it wasn't just** residences that were acquired and rejuvenated but also former churches and hotels.

A number of these grand homes and notable gardens in Macedon Ranges Shire were impacted by bushfires in 1939 as well as by Ash Wednesday in 1983.

Mount Macedon hill stations

The greatest concentration of grand country homes was at Mount Macedon. In the early 1870s, Upper (Mount) Macedon became popular as a **'hill station'** destination akin to the hill station of the British Raj, which appealed to wealthy Melburnians and retired pastoralists seeking a cooler retreat during the hot summer months. Mansions and large homes were built and their extensive grounds were planted with fashionable gardens. Each spring, members of staff from the big houses of Melbourne were sent by rail to Mount Macedon, often bringing with them horses and milking cows, in readiness for the families to follow in summer. Upon arrival from Melbourne, the families were conveyed

from the Middle Gully (Macedon) Railway Station by horse-drawn, and later motorised, taxis that met each train (G&MMDHS 2021).

The desirability of Mount Macedon as a summer retreat for the wealthy was secured in 1886 when the Governor of Victoria Sir Henry Loch acquired the mansion 'Rosenheim' as a vice-regal summer residence, known as 'Government Cottage'. The house had been built in 1869 for the wealthy newspaper proprietor David Syme. The Governor's residence at Mount Macedon gave the locality a social cachet comparable to South Yarra in Melbourne (where Government House was located) and prompted other prominent Melburnians to build summer retreats on Mount Macedon's southern slope (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2:23).

Figure 6.22 **The Governor of Victoria's summer residence, 'Government Cottage' at Mount** Macedon, photographed in 1910 by Victor Hood. (Source: State Library Victoria, Record ID9939648535807636)

Other notable homes included 'Alton', built in the 1880s, which was designed by J P Seddon for banker and politician Sir George Verdon, and 'Sefton', built in 1910 for the prominent businessman W L Baillieu to a design by Walter Butler (Edquist 2008:96).

Private gardens

Private gardens developed on pastoral estates and in the grand homes of Mount Macedon occupied large grounds and were often landscaped with features such as a lake, summerhouse, fernery, swimming pool and tennis court. 'Bolobek' included a golf course. Large gardens comprised different sections such as at Sir George Verdon's 'Alton', which included a woodland and a terraced garden. Large estates also often included an orchard and a kitchen garden.

Many of those who acquired properties at Mount Macedon were enthusiastic gardeners who had a fondness for the Australian bush. An early house at Mount Macedon was 'Derriweit Heights', built for Charles Ryan in 1873. Ryan was the father of Ellis Rowan,

wildflower painter, and the grandfather of Maie Casey. **'Glenrannoch'** was built in 1873 at Mount Macedon with a garden designed along the lines of on an Indian hillside garden. **'Duneira' homestead and stables were built for pastoralist Suetonius Henry Officer in** 1875. Purchased in 1992 by Stuart Stoneman (founder of SSW supermarkets), the property with its extensive established gardens is now managed by the Stuart Stoneman Foundation (Davies 2019:15). **'Dreamthorpe'** was established in 1886 by Nataniel Ronalds, a noted Melbourne florist, who established a nursery on the site; but it was Lady Alice Hodges who developed the fairy garden, secret holly walk, rock walls and lake during the Edwardian period (Davies 2019:36; GJM 2022:136). Other notable gardens at Mount Macedon include **'Durrol' and 'Hascombe'.**

Fashions in garden design aligned with the cool climate plants that grew well on the mountain, such as conifers and rhododendrons, and this was supported by the choice plant stock and landscaping expertise provided by Taylor and Sangster who opened their Mount Macedon Nursery in 1876 (Dunn 2002:422). There are claims that Ferdinand **Mueller also provided plant stock for some of the private gardens, for example 'Ard Rudah' (***Table Talk***, 7 Feb 1935:2). Charles Ryan reputedly had assistance from William Guilfoyle in planning the garden at 'Derriweit Heights' (Watts 1983:39).
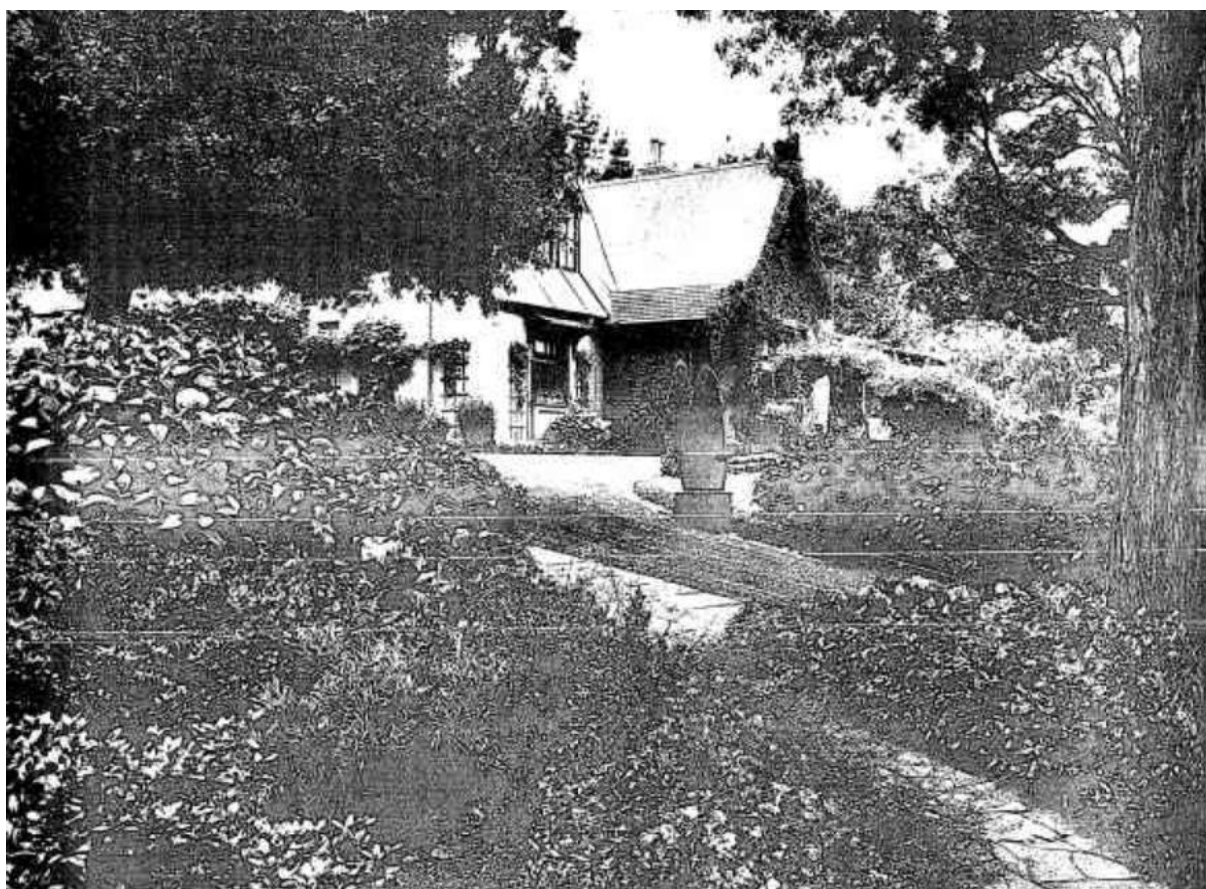
Figure 6.23 **The garden at 'Ard Rudah', photographed in** 1935. (Source: *Table Talk*, 1935)

In the twentieth century new gardens were developed at Mount Macedon and older, established gardens were re-designed. Landscape designer Edna Walling designed a **number of gardens in the area, including a section of the garden at 'Durrol', which was purchased by Stanley Allen in 1919; part of the garden at 'Greystanes', which was built** in 1918 for George Russell; and the garden at **'Matlock',** which was built around 1920 for George Creed (G&MMDHS 2009:69, 79, 85). Walling also designed a garden for Mr and **Mrs Goldie at Woodend c1930. The garden of 'Bolobek' was established in the early** twentieth century and was re-designed in a formal style by Joan Law-Smith in the later twentieth century (VHR citation H1316).
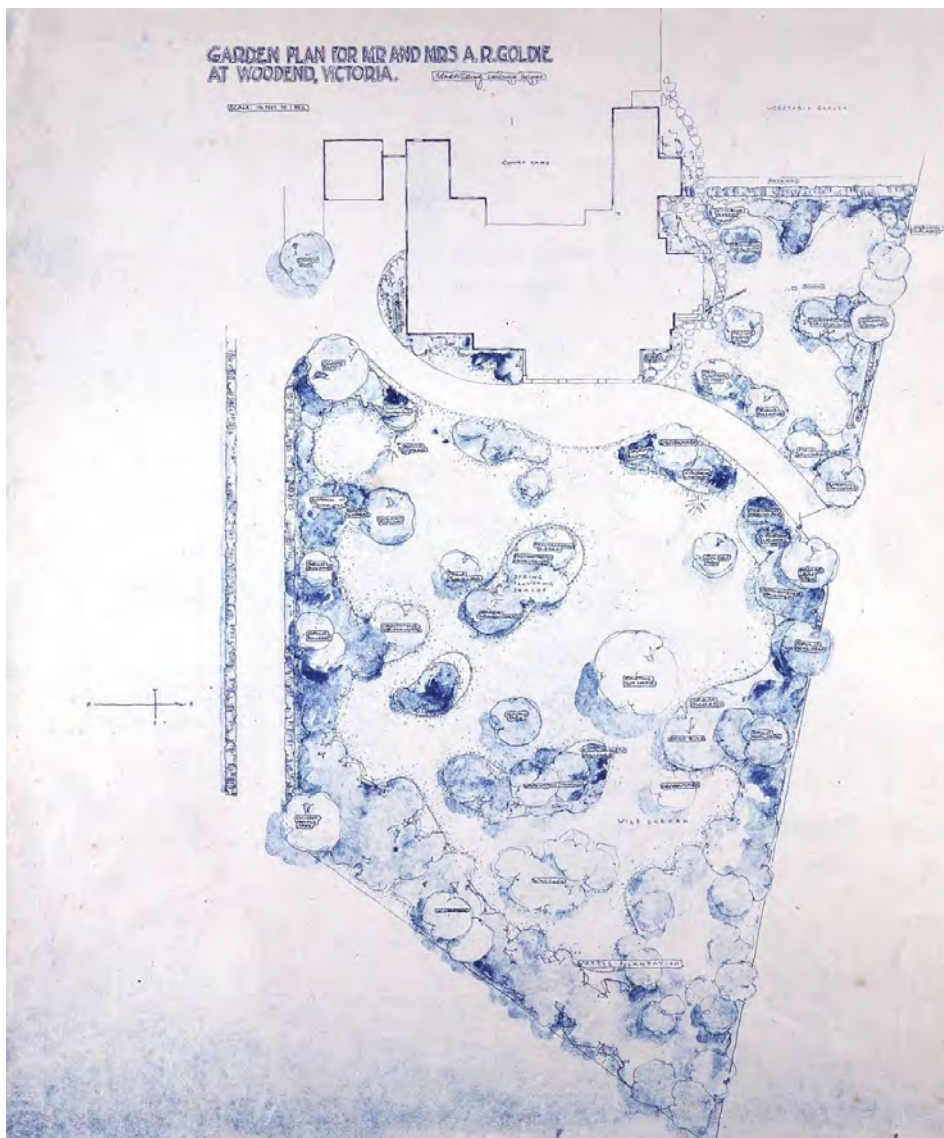
Figure 6.24 **Edna Walling's design for the garden for Mr and Mrs A R Goldie at Woodend, c1930.** (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H40518)

7 Governing Macedon Ranges Shire

7. Governing Macedon Ranges Shire

The local government administration of settlements developed from the 1850s, and saw the declaration of towns, boroughs and shires. Four municipalities were amalgamated in 1995 to create the Macedon Ranges Shire: Gisborne, Kyneton, Newham and Woodend, and Romsey. State government responsibilities in Macedon Ranges Shire included post and telegraph, and defence (until 1901), as well as policing and law and order.

7.1 Developing self-government and democracy

Road districts

The first forms of local government in Victoria were established under a series of Acts introduced over the period 1853–1863.

A Central Roads Board was established in 1851 to oversee the construction of a road network in Victoria. In 1853, an Act for 'making and improving Roads in the Colony of Victoria' provided for the formation, construction, improvement, management and maintenance of roads and bridges (AustLII 2019). Another Act in 1854, amended in 1860, allowed 'Municipal Institutions to be established in Victoria in districts of no more than nine square miles with a population of 300 or more' (AustLII 2019). In 1863, an Act was passed to establish Road Districts and Shires and 'generally to provide for the administration of local affairs without the limits of Boroughs' (AustLII 2019). The *Municipal Corporations Act*, which consolidated and amended the laws relating to municipal institutions, was also passed in 1863 (AustLII 2019).

Under these Acts, the following local road districts and boroughs (the latter based on township areas) were proclaimed over the period 1856–1864.

Table 7.1 Summary of local road districts and boroughs. (Sources: Walter 2010:1; Victorian Places 2015)

Road district or municipality	Year proclaimed
Lauriston-Edgecombe Road District	1856
Carlsruhe Road District	1859
Tylden-Trentham (after Woodend Road District was formed in 1857 and revoked in 1859)	1859
Metcalfe Road District	1860
Gisborne Road District and Gisborne Borough	1860
Municipal District of Kyneton	1857
Malmsbury Road District	1861
Woodend, Newham and Rochford Road District	1861
Borough of Malmsbury	1861
Springfield Road Board	1862
Borough of Woodend	1862

In 1864, the Kyneton Borough merged with the Lauriston–Edgecombe, Tylden–Trentham and Carlsruhe road boards to form the Kyneton United Road District (Walter 2010:1).

Local municipalities

A number of shires were formed over the period 1865–1905. They were administered by council members and a small number of staff who typically included the Shire secretary, rate collector, valuer, engineer, health inspector, and public vaccinator, aa well as pound keeper, and parks and gardens person. They were primarily concerned with the construction and maintenance of roads, the collection of rates, waste removal and sanitation. A number of buildings evidence the history of the administration of earlier municipalities, including the Kyneton Town Hall and Malmsbury Town Hall.

Figure 7.1 Malmsbury Town Hall built in 1868. (Source: NTAV Register, B0306)

In the twentieth century local councils assumed a greater role in social and community services, including public libraries, infant welfare services, and aged care services.

A brief description of each shire is provided below in chronological order according to the year it was proclaimed.

Shire of Kyneton (1865–1995)

The Kyneton United Road District was proclaimed the Shire of Kyneton on 3 January 1865. It had formed in 1864 as a Road District, comprised of the former Lauriston and Edgecombe Road District (1856), the Borough of Kyneton (1857), the Carlsruhe Road District (1859 with a Baynton Parish addition in 1864) and the Tylden–Trentham Road District (1859 with an addition in 1864) (Bick 1990:207).

A section of Bacchus March Shire was annexed to the Kyneton Shire on 5 February 1913. Malmsbury Borough (1861) united with the Kyneton Shire in 1915 and a portion of Ballan Shire was annexed to Kyneton Shire in 1921 (Bick 1990:207).

Kyneton Shire was administered from Kyneton. The **Shire's** townships also included the goldmining towns of Malmsbury, Lauriston and Trentham.

Shire of Gisborne (1871–1995)

The Borough of Gisborne and the Gisborne Road District were united to form the Shire of Gisborne in 1871. Much of the Gisborne Shire was occupied by the Macedon State Forest and included the townships of Macedon and Mount Macedon (*Victorian Places* 2015). Other townships included Bullengarook, New Gisborne, Riddells Creek, parts of Monegeetta and Bolinda, Kerrie, Cherokee and Cabbage Tree (later Couangalt, and now known as South Gisborne).

Shire of Gisborne councillors initially met in the Gisborne Courthouse and moved to new premises erected in Hamilton Street in 1928. The building was later extended to accommodate a public library and community uses. A new civic centre was built in 1979 (G&MMDHS 2001:60).

United Shire of Newham (1871–1905) and the Shire of Newham and Woodend (1905–1995)

The Woodend, Newham and Rochford Road District, together with the Borough of Woodend, became the United Shire of Newham in 1871. In 1905, it became the Shire of Newham and Woodend. It included the localities of Ashbourne, Hesket, Newham and Woodend North. The Shire's administrative centre was at Newham until the mid-1880s when it was moved to Woodend. (*Victorian Places* 2015).

In 1994 the Shire's northern and southern areas were included as part of the area reserved as the Cobaw and Macedon State Forests; this reservation left 38 per cent of the shire as farmland. Grazing was the main rural industry (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Shire of Springfield (1871–1916)

The Shire of Springfield was proclaimed on 23 January 1871, with an administrative centre in Goldie. In 1881 a railway line was constructed through Bolinda at the corner of the shire, and in 1892 another railway line was opened in the north of the shire. The Shire of Springfield amalgamated with the Shire of Romsey on 31 May 1916. In 1916 the shire's main settlements were the dairying centres of Chintin and Springfield (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Shire of Romsey (1871–1995)

The Shire of Romsey was created on 16 June 1871. It extended from Lancefield to Clarkefield but excluded the district of Springfield which was created as a separate shire (*Victorian Places* 2015). The Lancefield district was severed and made a separate shire in 1890. On 31 May 1916, the Lancefield and Springfield shires were united with the Shire of Romsey (*Victorian Places* 2015). The shire's three largest towns—Lancefield, Riddells Creek and Romsey—were in the western half of the municipality, which also included the localities of Kerrie, Hesket and Cherokee, Darraweit Guim, Riddells Creek and Mount William (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Up until 1942, the Romsey Shire Council held its meetings in the former Lancefield Roads Board building at 130 Main Street, Romsey, which was constructed c1899 (Woodhouse 2020:84). A dedicated space for council offices was established in 1942 when the former Commercial Bank building in Romsey was purchased for use as council chambers.

Renovation of the premises occurred in 1958, with additions made in later years (Reid 1992:53).

Macedon Ranges Shire

The Macedon Ranges Shire was formed on 19 January 1995 through the amalgamation of the shires of Gisborne, Newham and Woodend, Romsey, and most of the Shire of Kyneton. The Shire's dominant features, Mount Macedon and the Great Dividing Range, were the source of its name (*Victorian Places* 2015).

The Shire has an area of 1747 square kilometres and is crossed in a north-westerly direction by the Calder Freeway and railway line from Melbourne to Bendigo (*Victorian Places* 2015). The shire's administration offices are at Gisborne and Kyneton. There are also offices at Romsey and Woodend.

Many of the official administrative records and land records of Macedon Ranges Shire and its preceding municipalities are held at the Public Records Office of Victoria.

Women in politics and government

Women's suffrage won support in many localities of the Macedon Ranges Shire and many local women signed the monster 'women's suffrage petition' of 1891 that was presented to the Victorian Parliament. More than 160 signatures from women in Kyneton (or with Kyneton addresses) were included in the petition.

A strong theme in the history of local government in Macedon Ranges Shire has been the important role played by women. An example was Blanche Ross-Watt who was elected to the Gisborne Shire Council in 1925. Ross-Watt became the first female shire president in Victoria in 1931 and served a second term as president in 1939. Ross-Watt was also one of the first group of 14 women to be appointed justices of the peace in Victoria. Appointed OBE in 1949, she is remembered for her work with a number of charities in the district (Robertson 2002). The lych gate at St Paul's Anglican Church in Gisborne commemorates the lives of Blanche Ross-Watt, who died in 1956, and her daughter, Katherine Ross-Watt (known as Betty) and friend Elsa Sauer ('Blanche Ross Watt, Katherine Ross Watt & Elsa Sauer', *Monument Australia* 2022). Ross-Watt's former home in Ferrier Road, Gisborne, remains in evidence today.

Political movements

Australian Nationalist Association

The Australian Nationalist Association (ANA) was an influential movement in the Shire and across Victoria from the 1880s and through the early twentieth century. In 1914, arising from interest initiated by a correspondent to the *Kyneton Guardian*, a group of delegates from Trentham East and Newham met at the Newham public hall and launched **the Victorian Farmers' Union, later the Victorian Country Party, then the United Country Party, which in turn became today's National Pa**rty (Barned 1985: 34).

The Federal Movement

Kyneton played an important role in the Federal Movement of the 1890s, which led to Federation. In March 1893, the Australian **Natives'** Association (ANA) met at the Kyneton Mechanics Institute and resolved unanimously to establish Federation Leagues throughout Victoria (Johnson 1984). This meeting, which preceded the better-known Corowa conference of July 1893, was pivotal in the progress of the Federal Movement and ultimately the Federation of the Australian states and territories in 1901.

7.2 Maintaining law and order

Policing

Three constables from the Sydney Police Force arrived in Melbourne with Police Magistrate Captain William Lonsdale on 1 October 1836. Much of their work involved enforcing the *Sydney Police Act 1833*, which was extended to include Melbourne. This legislation was largely concerned with town administration. The Melbourne Police existed alongside the Mounted (Military) Police, formed in 1838–1839, and the Native Police Corps, formed in 1842 (Wilson 2008; Boxshall 2017: 97). In 1838–18**39 Charles Ebden's** Carlsruhe pastoral run became the base for a section of the 23rd Foot Regiment that was sent from Melbourne as a result of conflict between Europeans and Aboriginal people at Barfold (*Kyneton Connections* 2021). In 1842, the Superintendent of the Native Police Captain Henry Dana stationed four troopers on Frederick **Powlett's** station near Mount Macedon to assist in maintaining law and order in the district (Boxshall 2017: 97).

Other colonial policing was provided by the Border Police. In September 1839, the first troopers of the Border Police, who were armed and mounted, arrived in the Port Phillip District under the charge of Commissioner of Crown Lands, Henry Fysche Gisborne. Their task was to adjudicate land disputes and maintain peace between the Aboriginal peoples and settlers. Border Police camps were established in the Port Phillip District, with

barracks established on the south side of Jackson Creek at Gisborne in 1840 and at Carlsruhe in 1839 (G&MMDHS 2021; *Victorian Places* 2015).

In 1846 the nucleus of what was to become Kyneton consisted of a slab homestead built **by Charles Wedge and a teamsters' camping reserve on the r**iver flat at the corner of **today's Mitchell and Jeffreys streets. After the establishment of the Mount** Macedon Police District in 1847, this site became known as the police paddock (on the Post Office Creek) (*Victorian Places* 2015; Burns 2002:11). By 1848 a log lock-up and police station was established here (McKimmie and Strauch 2021:81). A **pound also operated from Wedge's** station in 1849 (*VGG*, 4 Dec 1849:1808). A new police station was erected at Kyneton in the period 1851–54 on an extension of Ebden Street (McKimmie and Strauch 2021:81).

Figure 7.2 Detail from an early plan of Kyneton, 1849, showing the police paddock and early police buildings on the Post Office Creek. (Source: Historic Plans Collection, Public Record Office Victoria)

The Mounted Police was formed in 1850, following the disbanding of the Border Police. By this time, the country areas of the Port Phillip District had been divided into twelve police districts. Each had a head station consisting of quarters for the men, stables, a lock-up, and a courtroom with offices. In 1847, after a renewal application for a licence for the Carlsruhe Inn was refused, the building became the Mount Macedon Police District headquarters. The district was a large area with its borders reaching from Keilor in the south, to the Murray River to the north, and the South Australian border to the west (G&MMDHS 2021). The headquarters remained at Carlsruhe until it was relocated to Kyneton in 1860 (Bick 1990:247). A police camp was established at what is now Kyneton at the junction of Post Office Creek and the Campaspe River (*Weekly Times*, 17 March 1928:5).

The advent of the goldrushes in the Colony of Victoria from 1851, which brought a large influx of people to the gold-**mining districts, saw the colony's police forces quickly**

overwhelmed. In 1852 escort barracks were established along the route of the Mount Alexander Road (Moloney 2014:67).

The increased demand for policing meant an overhaul of policing in the Colony of Victoria became critical. In 1852, the existing autonomous police forces, including the Mounted County Bourke Police, the Gold Mounted Police Force, the Native Police, the Town Police of Melbourne, and those constables stationed in areas where magistrates operated were amalgamated under the *Police Regulation Act 1853*. This Act also created the position of chief commissioner to which Kyneton squatter William Henry Fancourt Mitchell was appointed in January 1853 (Wilson 2008; Blake 1971:91).

The Carlsruhe Police District was formed in 1860, which incorporated the districts of Kyneton, Carlsruhe, Woodend, Black Forest (Macedon) and Gisborne (Boxshall 2017:98). An extensive police paddock of over 400 acres were reserved at Carlsruhe (*VGG*, 24 April 1860:772), and police buildings were constructed at the aforementioned localities on reserves set aside for policing purposes.

The Kyneton Police Barracks opened in 1860 on the new police reserve bounded by Mollison, Hutton, Ebden and Jennings streets, and a bluestone lock-up was built here in 1861, replacing an earlier timber building. In 1862 the lock-up was officially designated as the Kyneton Gaol and recognised as a public gaol according to newly passed legislation (*VGG*, 11 Feb 1862:271). By 1867, a stone police building on the reserve **housed the superintendent's office, a district store and a clerk's office. In 1882, a two**-storey red-brick police station was built to replace the earlier 1860s police complex (McKimmie and Strauch 2021:83–84). A new police station opened in the 1950s, with new premises built in 2009.

When new towns were surveyed, land was generally set aside for a police paddock. As towns developed, reserves were allocated for a police station, lock-up and a local courthouse.

A police paddock was reserved at Ashbourne, which was used as a staging post for the gold escort. A police station was built here in the late 1850s (Holth 2014:6).

In Malmsbury, a police station was established in 1852 and a new building was completed in 1853. A later bluestone police station with a second lockup was erected in 1858. A police residence was built in 1860 (MHS, pers com, 2022).

Figure 7.3 Kyneton police station, erected c1885. (Source: PROV)

Courts

In 1838, police magistrate William Lonsdale established courts of petty sessions (known as magistrates courts from 1969), which dealt with minor issues. Local magistrates (typically local land-holders) were appointed to the bench.

From December 1846, a court of petty sessions was held at Wedge's station, near Kyneton (then referred to as the Mount Macedon district) (*NSWGG*, 22 Dec 1846:1603). By 1848, a courthouse had been built from timber slabs near the site that would later become the Kyneton racecourse (*History of Kyneton* 1981:8). Court hearings were mostly concerned with the licencing and impounding of stock and were sometimes held at the Bush Inn in Gisborne (Bick 1990:227).

Magistrates courts or courts of petty sessions were subsequently heard in other localities in suitable available buildings, such as a local hotel, or in purpose-built courthouses erected at a later date. At Malmsbury in 1861 the court of petty sessions was first proposed to be held in the former Caroline Chisholm Shelter, which was by then being used as the Malmsbury council chambers, but instead it began in Edmund Hickey's new bluestone store and moved to the renovated council chambers in 1863 (MHS, pers com, 2022).

In 1852, County Courts were created to deal with more serious civil matters and, in country areas, insolvency. In the same year, the Supreme Court of Victoria was established to deal with matters such as criminal cases, probate issues, civil actions and

appeals (*Victorian Genealogy* 2022). The County Court operated a circuit court system that allowed cases to be heard in some of the larger towns, which included Kyneton and Romsey. As a result, these towns had larger court buildings. A court of mines, or mining wardens court, also operated in the Kyneton courthouse and in the Malmsbury courthouse in the 1860s.

A bluestone courthouse was built in the Kyneton Police Paddock in 1856, the second oldest courthouse in Victoria. It was built to a design by the eminent Public Works Department (PWD) architect J J Clark (Challinger 2001:112). In 1870 a young Ned Kelly appeared before the magistrate at the Kyneton courthouse for robbery (VHD 638, VHR 1472). In 1858 a two-storey combined courthouse and police station was built at Gisborne to a design by PWD architect Samuel White (Challinger 2001:93). Brick stables and a bluestone lock-up were added in 1861. The Gisborne courthouse was used regularly until 1970 and then only occasionally until it was officially closed in 1983. It is now home to the Gisborne & Mount Macedon Districts Historical Society (G&MMDHS 2021; Challinger 2001:93).

Authority to hold a court of petty sessions in Malmsbury was gazetted 1861 (*VGG*, 3 May 1861).

A courthouse was built in Woodend in 1871 to a design by PWD architect H A Williams. It was used for the **local court of petty sessions until 1964 and for coroner's court hearings** until the 1970s. It is now home to the Woodend and District Heritage Society (Challinger 2001:198). New court houses opened in Lancefield and Romsey in 1888, built to the same plan by PWD architect G W Watson.

A declining rural population and centralisation of court services resulted in the discontinuation of 115 courts in Victoria between 1965 and 1985 and the closure of 76 buildings. In 1990, another 42 courts ceased, which resulted in the closure of 36 additional courthouses (Challinger 2001:22). The Lancefield Court House was closed in 1983 and later housed a museum. Romsey Court House closed in 1967 and was sold to the Country Fire Authority for use as a fire station (Challinger 2001:113, 162).

Figure 7.4 Kyneton Court House, built in 1856–57. (Source: Victorian Heritage Register, H1472)

Figure 7.5 Woodend Courthouse. (Source: Woodend Historical Society website)

Figure 7.6 Gisborne Courthouse. (Source: PROV)

Malmsbury Youth Training Centre

The Victorian Government opened the first stage of a youth training centre at Malmsbury in 1965. On completion, the centre accommodated up to 150 male trainees in the 17–20-year age group in an open- to medium-security facility. The Malmsbury Youth Training Centre provided a secure residential facility and became the main centre for the Work Release Program for trainees. The facility has been redeveloped a number of times since 1965 and has undergone several name changes: the Malmsbury Juvenile Justice Centre (1993–2007); Malmsbury Youth Justice Centre (2007–2015); and Malmsbury Youth Justice Precinct (2015 to current) (*Finding Records* 2019).

It will be closed in 2023. Housing was provided for employees at the Malmsbury Youth Training Centre and many of these were sold and removed in the mid-1990s. Some of these houses were relocated elsewhere in Malmsbury and still exist.

7.3 Defending Victoria and Australia

Defending Victoria

There were limited defence personnel in colonial Victoria before the 1850s but subsequent decades saw the establishment of local volunteer corps. The volunteer corps comprised units of unpaid part-time soldiers to provide local defence if needed. The corps were maintained by communities that raised money and organised shooting competitions to equip, sustain and improve their corps.

Local military groups were active in the Shire from the mid nineteenth century. Victoria's first significant unit of army cavalry was the volunteer Kyneton and District Mounted Rifle Corps, which was formed in 1860 (Bick 1990:526).

Military exercises, parades and competitions were held on private and public land, for example in Lancefield in 1891 (*Argus*, 28 March 1891:8). The volunteer rifle club at Malmsbury, formed in 1885, practised on the Malmsbury Common (*Kyneton Observer*, 5 March 1885:2). Rifle ranges were also provided to support these activities.

Defending Australia

With Federation in 1901, defence became a responsibility of the Commonwealth of Australia rather than the new states and territories. Volunteer corps and militia regiments were dissolved with the introduction of compulsory military training for boys in 1912. As part of this program there were training exercises and military camps held in the Shire. A large military camp was held in Gisborne in 1913 (*Kerang News*, 21 Nov 1913: 5).

Figure 7.7 **View of the military camp held at 'Sunny Acres', Gisborne, November 1913. (Source:** G&MMDHS in *Pictorial Gisborne*)

The area that now comprises Bald Hill Reserve in Kyneton was developed by the Commonwealth Department of Defence in 1906 for use as a rifle range and military training ground. From this time until 1986 the reserve was utilised by the Department of Defence as a weapons testing site that included a one-mile shooting range. Evidence of these activities can still be found within the reserve. Although unconfirmed, the reserve may have been also utilised by the Kyneton and District Mounted Rifle Brigade (Atlas Ecology 2012).

Drill halls were also built to provide office headquarters, a meeting place and a mess room for local volunteer army corps. The Kyneton Drill Hall, built in 1903, was the home of country Victoria's first significant unit of army cavalry, the volunteer Kyneton and District Mounted Rifle Corps (Bick 1990:526).

Figure 7.8 **Kyneton Drill Hall, built in 1903. (Source: Victoria's War Inventory)**

The mansion **'Mintaro'** at Monegeeta was used as an army barracks from 1941 until 1946 (Mintaro, VHR H2317).

The Australian Army established a Development and Proving Ground at Monegeetta after World War II; prototypes for new armoured vehicles and other military vehicles continue to be developed and tested at the site.

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL   P04301.004

Figure 7.9 Monegeetta Proving Ground, 1949. (Source: Australian War Memorial, Accession No. P04301.004)

7.4 Protecting Macedon Ranges' heritage

The cultural landscape of Macedon Ranges Shire became the first area in Victoria to be recognized for environmental, social, cultural and economic values under the *Planning and Environment Amendment (Distinctive Areas and Landscapes) Act 2018* (DELWP 2022).

A number of studies and reviews, undertaken by the Macedon Ranges Shire Council from the 1990s, have been critical in identifying protecting the heritage of the Shire though making recommendations that have since become part of the Heritage Overlay in the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme. These studies include the 'Shire of Kyneton Conservation (Heritage) Study' (1990); the **Macedon Ranges Cultural Heritage and Landscape Study'** (1994) undertaken for the former Shires of Gisborne, Newham,

Woodend and Romsey; the 'Macedon Ranges Shire: Stage One Heritage Review' (2010), which focused on the Lancefield, Riddells Creek, Romsey and Woodend districts; the **'Gisborne and Kyneton Heritage Study'** (2017); and the 'Macedon Ranges Shire Council: Woodend, Lancefield, Macedon and Mount Macedon Heritage Study' (2019). Other important studies include the work of Hilary du Cros in the 1990s on the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the Shire.

A number of places in Macedon Ranges Shire are also listed on the Victorian Heritage Register, the National Heritage List and the Commonwealth Heritage List, as well as the non-statutory lists of the National Trust of Australia (Vic) and the Register of the National Estate. The Mount William quarry site of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people is the only place in the Shire listed on the National Heritage List.

The **five** historical societies within the Macedon Ranges Shire have also played an important role in protecting and promoting the heritage of Macedon Ranges Shire, including its documentary heritage in the form of archives and historical photos collections. These societies are the Gisborne and Mount Macedon Districts Historical Society, Kyneton Historical Society, Malmsbury Historical Society, Romsey and Lancefield Districts Historical Society, and the Woodend and District Heritage Society. Together **with the Friends of Kyneton Museum,** they meet regularly as the Macedon Ranges Heritage Council. The Heritage Council was formed in 1995 with the objectives to foster communication between the historical societies, to provide an avenue for the sharing of ideas and expertise, and to provide a focal point for the Macedon Ranges Shire Council (G&MMDHS 2021). The archival records of the Shire and its former preceding municipalities are preserved at the Public Records Office of Victoria.

In 1968, Kyneton Shire Council purchased the former Bank of New South Wales building in Piper Street, Kyneton, to house the Kyneton Folk Museum, which opened in 1970 (McKimmie and Strauch 2021:89). This holds a collection of over 8000 items, most of which have come from the local area. A number of other buildings have been moved to the former bank site, including the two-roomed Theaden Cottage (c.1840s), which was moved to the site from a property at Pastoria East.

8 Building community life

8. Building community life

A wide range of endeavours and activities make up the rich history of community life of the Macedon Ranges Shire. Often enabled by public funding, many local institutions and their surviving buildings reflect the energetic and visionary commitment of individuals, organisations and local communities over many decades. The relatively early and concentrated pattern of settlement in the Shire produced a rich legacy of community activity and associated community places, including churches, schools, hospitals and public halls.

8.1 Maintaining spiritual life

Churches were among the earliest buildings erected in a new township. The establishment of a church of a particular denomination reflected the cultural background and religious affiliations of the early settlers. Prior to the erection of permanent church buildings, religious services were conducted wherever a suitable venue was available.

The dominant Christian denominations in the Colony of Victoria (Anglican, Catholic, Methodist and Presbyterian) were offered land grants and limited financial aid by the government, and church buildings were erected as settlements grew and funds were raised for the establishment of permanent structures. Early structures were often constructed on Crown land reserves. Most of these titles were passed over to the occupants under the *Abolition of State Aid to Religion Act 1871*. Residences for clergy were also erected close to church buildings.

Early prayer meetings were held on pastoral stations from the late 1830s and embryonic church groups were established. One of the more comprehensive groups of church buildings in the Shire is at Gisborne where churches date from three major periods of development: the gold rush period of the 1850s; the subsequent period of rebuilding in the 1860s, following the arrival of the railway and the development of farming as a result of the selection acts; and during the twentieth century. The group includes St Paul's Church of England, a prefabricated iron building erected in 1855; St Andrew's Presbyterian Church (1871); and St Brigid's Catholic Church, built in the 1870s, which was one of several churches erected to replace the first wave of timber churches in the district. St Paul's was replaced by a new stone church in 1953. (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2:13; G&MMDHS 2001:120).

Kyneton too has retained a notable collection of substantial bluestone churches contained within three town blocks: the Anglican church opened in 1856, the Presbyterian (now Uniting Church) in 1858, the Congregational Church in 1860 (now the Bluestone

Theatre), the Catholic Church in 1861, and the Methodist Church in 1870 (now the Baptist Church).

The former two-storey Junction Hotel built in Malmsbury in 1872 was used in the 1980s by a religious group headed by the former Anglican minister Reverend Ron Wood (MHS, pers com, 2022).

Figure 8.1 Detail from Robert **Hoddle's Kyneton township plan dated 1849, showing the various** two-acre reserves set aside for various religious denominations. (Source: Historic Plans Collection, PROV)

Anglican churches

The first Anglican church at Gisborne was built from iron in the early 1850s. A new Anglican church at Gisborne, built from local stone, was built on the existing church reserve in 1953.

A Church of England Sunday School was opened in Malmsbury in 1857 and was used as a school during the week and a church and Sunday school on Sundays (Stevens 1987: 31). **St John's Church of England, designed by architects Purchas and Sawyer, opened in** Malmsbury in 1866 (Lewis 1991: 132).

Anglican services were held in Kyneton at the police station on Post Office Creek prior to **St Paul's** Church being built in 1855. Construction of a rectory was begun in 1850, **making it Kyneton's oldest building. A minister was appointed in 1851 (KHS, pers com,** 2022).

An Anglican church, dedicated as the Church of the Comforter, was erected in 1859 in Middle Gully (Macedon). It was built by the Melbourne and Murray River railway line contractors, Cornish and Bruce, to serve the spiritual needs of the railway workers. A

new church was built on another site in 1931 and was renamed the Holy Trinity Church in 1935. This church was destroyed in the Ash Wednesday bushfires in 1983 (G&MMDHS 2009:116). When the Anglican communities of both Macedon and Mount Macedon lost their churches to the 1983 bushfires, a 1953 bequest by architect Christopher Cowper enabled the construction of the Church of the Resurrection at Macedon, which includes a stained-glass window by the artist Leonard French. The church was dedicated in 1986 (G&MMDHS 2009:119).

Figure 8.2 **St Paul's Ang**lican Church, Gisborne, built from iron in 1858 (now demolished). (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H32492/5898)

St **Mary's** Anglican Church in Woodend, built of stone in 1864, replaced a simple wooden church erected in 1859 (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2:12–13). The former timber church building was used as a Sunday School from 1890 and a bell tower was added to the stone church in 1928 (Barned 1985:108-109).

St Paul's Church of England was built at Romsey and opened in 1871. An oak tree planted at the site the following year survives. The decorative entrance gates were added in 1953 to commemorate Charles F D Thomson, who was killed in World War II (Woodhouse 2020:6).

Catholic churches

Mass for the Catholic population in the Macedon Ranges Shire was first celebrated at Kyneton in 1852 at the Gold Diggers Arms (now the Royal George Hotel) in Piper Street.

The foundation stone of a new chapel in Kyneton was laid in 1857 and the building was completed in 1861 (*Mount Alexander Mail*, 7 June 1861:6). Dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary (and known as St Mary's), the Kyneton Catholic church was built to a design of Charles Hansom, and completed by William Wardell, the pre-eminent Gothic Revival architect in Victoria. St Mary's in Kyneton is almost identical to St Patrick's Catholic Church in Kilmore, which was also built in 1857, and also designed by Samson and Wardell (Lewis 1991:131). A substantial bluestone presbytery was also built at Kyneton to accommodate the dean, several priests and a housekeeper. Much of the bluestone used in construction was quarried on site (FoKM, pers com, 2022).

The period from the late 1850s until the 1870s saw the first wave of Catholic Church buildings in the municipality, which corresponded with the emergence and growth of a network of small farming and mining towns.

Figure 8.3 Catholic Presbytery, Kyneton, 1898. (Source: Thomas Carr, *Some of the Fruits of Fifty Years*, 1897)
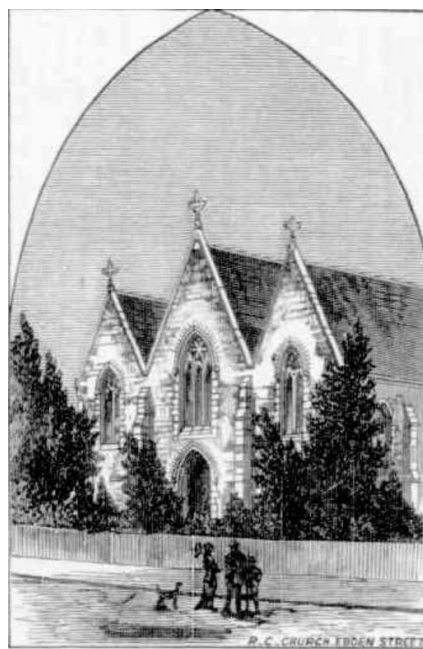
Figure 8.4 Catholic Church, Kyneton, 1880. (Source: *Australasian Sketcher*, 5 June 1880: 117

Land for a Catholic church at Lancefield was gazetted in 1869. St Mary's Catholic Church was opened in Lancefield in 1873 (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2:12–13).

A Catholic church was built at Woodend in 1866; this was constructed of bluestone. A new church building to accommodate St Ambrose's Catholic Church in Woodend was erected in 1916 (Barned 1985:104).

Catholic worship was established early at Bullengarook where there was a concentration of Irish Catholic settlers. Mass was celebrated in the Catholic schoolhouse from the

1860s. St Colmcille's Church at Bullengarook was built in 1870 and closed in 1954; the building was demolished in 1960.

In Romsey, a weatherboard Catholic Church opened in 1868 (demolished 1967). The current red brick St **Mary's Church,** designed by prolific Catholic church architect A A Fritsch, opened in 1926 (Woodhouse 2020:20).

A Catholic school built in Ashbourne in the early 1870s was also used as a church. Initially known as the Campaspe Church, it was named St **Michael's** and later known as the Ashbourne Church.

St **Patrick's** Catholic Church opened in Macedon in 1891, initially occupying a public hall that had been built by William Shires in 1887. The church was destroyed in the Ash Wednesday bushfires in 1983 and was replaced by a new church building in 1988 (G&MMDHS 2009:117).

In Malmsbury a new Catholic church, constructed from bluestone that had been used in the local Tuckers Corn Store, was erected adjoining the Catholic school; this was officially opened in April 1921 as the Church of our Lady Help of Christians (MHS, pers com, 2022).

The Marist Brothers purchased the former Grimwade property 'Drusilla' at Macedon in 1945 for use as a novitiate. A double-storey mansion had been built on the property in the 1930s. The Marists used the building as a novitiate until 1977 after which it was used as a venue for religious retreats (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 4:545).

Methodist churches

The Methodist community at Kyneton built a timber church in 1854, and a bluestone church was completed in 1870 (Benson 1935: 447–448). At Woodend a Methodist chapel was built in 1860.

A site was reserved at Malmsbury for a Wesleyan church in 1865 on the site of a former Caroline Chisholm shelter shed. Services commenced in the former shelter shed in 1867. A church was built in 1868 and was still in use until 1885 (MHS). A new Wesleyan Methodist Church was built at a new site on the corner of Mollison and Barker Streets in Malmsbury in 1885. The old church was sold to the local council and restored to become a community hall known as Albert Hall. This building was used for Sunday School purposes, as well as by the Salvation Army and the Malmsbury Independent Order of Rechabites. It was also temporarily used by the Malmsbury State School (1912–1913) while the school was being refurbished. The later church building of 1885 was demolished in the 1960s due to subsidence, and the current police station was built on the site in 1999.

A Methodist church was built at Gisborne in 1875 but this was closed in 1930 (G&MMDHS 2001:117).

Other Wesleyan churches in the Shire include the Newham Wesleyan Church, which opened in 1860 and served the Newham Community for over 120 years.

Presbyterian churches

As many of those who took up the large pastoral runs in the district were Scottish, this meant that the early Presbyterian communities and church-building funds often had generous benefactors.

St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Kyneton, designed by architect James Thomson, opened in 1857 (Lewis 1991:131). A timber church was opened by the Presbyterians at Gisborne the following year, but this was replaced in 1871 with a new church designed by notable church architect Lloyd Tayler. A manse was built in 1908.

The first Presbyterian services to be held in the Woodend district were conducted in a private home in Springfield (North Woodend) in 1860 and a timber church was built in the Woodend township in 1861. A new church at Woodend was built on a different site in 1910 to a design by Gisborne architect Mr Crew and the original timber church was moved to the site c1937 (Barned 1985:106-107).

Presbyterian services commenced in Malmsbury in 1862, with a timber church erected in 1873.

Presbyterians at Romsey used a barn for their first church services (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2:12–13). A bluestone church, designed by G D Langley, opened in 1865 with a bellcote added in 1873 (Woodhouse 2020:52; Lewis 1991:146).

The Lancefield Presbyterian church in High Street was built in 1866 (*Kyneton Guardian*, 30 June 1866:2).

A Presbyterian church opened at Newham in 1868 with services conducted in Scottish Gaelic. The bluestone church (now privately owned) is still standing (McFadzean 2013).

Presbyterian church meetings commenced in Malmsbury in 1862 where a timber church was built in 1873 (*Kyneton Guardian*, 15 March 1873:2). This church merged with the Malmsbury Methodist Church in 1972 and become known as the United Parish Church. It was subsequently closed and the building was sold (D Orr, pers com, 2022).

The Mount Macedon Presbyterian Church was first built in 1863, but the stone building was constructed 1874. The church was reduced to the stone walls in the Ash Wednesday fires in February 1983 and was reconstructed by architect Keith Butler in 1983–84 (GJM 2022:145)

In the 1850s there were a number of different sects of Presbyterianism active in Victoria. These were united in 1859 as the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, which in 1901 joined the Presbyterian Church of Australia. Most Presbyterian churches in Macedon Ranges Shire joined the Uniting Church in Australia when it was established in 1977. An **exception was St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Gisborne, which remained affiliated** with the Presbyterian Church. Many of the ministers of the United Church are women.

Figure 8.5 Former Newman Presbyterian Church, built in 1868. (Source: NTAV Register, B6352)
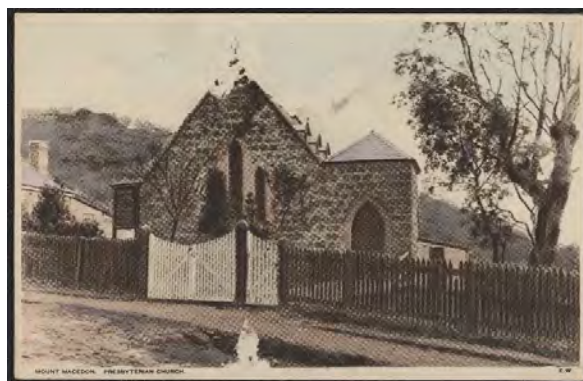
Figure 8.6 Mount Macedon Presbyterian Church, c1930s–40s. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H90.140/602)

Other faiths

Baptist churches

In December 1859, a Baptist chapel was opened in Kyneton on land donated by Thomas Clowes on his Woodside run, with the Minister Ingram Moody in residence. The Baptists also held early services in the Mechanics Institute before a new chapel was opened in 1861. The Baptist Church reopened after renovations in 1869. Other denominations also used the building for up to seventy years until it was moved to Altona in about 1922 (Bick 1990: 223).

A Zion Baptist Church, one of only a few Strict Baptist chapels built in Victoria, is located in Colwells Road, Hanging Rock (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2: 15). By 1940, this had ceased being used as a church and was sold **into private ownership**.

Congregational churches

Like the Wesleyan Methodist churches, the Congregational Church was an English Non-Conformist denomination that found a significant following in central Victoria. The Congregational Church at Kyneton, built in 1853, and rebuilt in 1859–1860, is one of its earliest churches. This building is now used as an Arts Centre. A pipe organ built by George Fincham, which was installed in the church in 1880, remains intact (Lewis 1991: 132).

Figure 8.7 Congregational Church, Kyneton, built 1859–60, now used as an Arts Centre. (Source: NTAV Register, B2051)

Salvation Army

The Salvation Army held its first meeting in Kyneton in the Temperance Hall in 1884. Salvation Army barracks opened in Bowen Street in 1885 and were used for meetings, weddings and other purposes. The Salvation Army closed the building in c1958 and moved its operations to Broadford (McKimmie and Strauch 2021:67–69).

8.2 Educating people

Formal education

In the early pastoral period, the sons of pastoralists were often educated at boarding schools in Melbourne. Daughters were instructed by governesses and tutors at home. Many of the children of pastoral workers went without formal education.

National schools, denominational schools and common schools

National schools, based on the Irish 'National Schools' model, were introduced in Victoria in the 1850s, following their adoption by Governor Richard Bourke in NSW. The Victorian government supported and funded the operation of the elementary (primary) education of children from the 1850s through the National School system. Some of the earliest national schools were established at Gisborne (1853), Woodend (1855), and Kyneton (1856). Other national schools were opened later at Rochford (1858) and Lancefield in 1861 (Reid 1992:164). National schools were single buildings, generally with a boys' classroom and a girls' classroom and accommodation for the teacher. The Kyneton National School, for example, consisted of two rough bluestone rooms.

In addition to government-run National Schools, there were also many small church schools established by the dominant religious dominations across the Shire from the 1850s. These schools operated with the assistance of government funding and were often established through a land grant. The relatively concentrated nature of settlement in Macedon Ranges Shire resulted in a large number of small schools across the area.

A Church of England denominational school opened in Kyneton in 1852 (Rankin 1939:79). The Church of England and Presbyterian churches combined to open Woodend School No. 684 in 1862 (Boxshall 2017:119). A Presbyterian common school opened at Rochford South in 1863 and became Rochford South State School No. 539 (Barned 1983:32). The Newham Combined Protestant School opened in January 1860, it moved to a new site in June 1877 as State School No. 1913 and continues to operate.

A number of schools opened in the Hesket and Kerrie areas to cater for the children of sawmillers working in the forests of the district. Mountain Hut school was opened at Hesket in 1858. The American Steam Sawmill School was opened at Hesket in 1870.

A school was established near William De Graves flour mill at Boggy Creek near Kyneton to provide education to the children of the mill workers who lived in 22 houses nearby. A school commenced at the mill itself in the late 1850s, followed by the Campaspe Grammar School that opened in 1860. The school became Riverview State School No. 706 in 1873 (McKimmie and Strauch 2021:128; Blake 1973:674).

A new Board of Education in Victoria took over the management and funding of all national and church schools under the *Common Schools Act* of 1862. New schools and many of the existing National Schools were automatically re-designated as Common Schools in 1862, including Kyneton No. 343 and Woodend No. 657 (Blake 1973:644; Barned 1985:95). The existing church schools continued to operate as designated Denominational Schools under the act and continued to receive government funding. New schools in the 1860s included a denominational school at Macedon (1869) and a school at Pipers Creek (1866).

There were also a number of newly established common schools in the Shire, including Lauriston Common School No. 1083 (1863), Lancefield Common School No 707 (1865) and Bullengarook Common School (1868) (Watson 2006:255).

Figure 8.8 The former Pipers Creek Common School No. 873, established in 1866, showing the teacher's residence and schoolhouse. (Source: NTAV Register, B3021)

Many schools in the Shire passed through various stages of development **with these governmental and legislative changes;** one such example was the Kyneton National School, which became a Common School in 1862 (Blake 1973:644).

State schools

State schools were established in Victoria from 1873, following the passage of the *Education Act* of 1872, which established a central public school system based on the principles of '**free,** compulsory and **secular'** education. One of the purposes of the new act was to rationalise the number of small schools in a locality and as a result many of the smaller schools were closed. Many existing schools, including common schools and denominational schools, were converted to state schools in 1873. Kyneton Common School became Kyneton State School No. 343 (Blake 1973:644) and was extended in 1874. Woodend Common School became Woodend State School No. 647 (Barned 1985:95). Lauriston Common School became Lauriston State School No. 1083. Gisborne State School No. 262 opened in 1879, with the former National School adapted as a **teacher's residence.**

An earlier school at Riddells Creek, which opened in 1859, became Riddells Creek State School No. 528; this was replaced in 1928 by a new school transported from Glenroy. A new school building was completed in the 1980s and the school continues today.

The former Rochford National School became State School No. 540, with a new brick state school building erected in 1879. It is the only building evidencing the former settlement of Rochford (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2:14). Similarly, Springfield (Woodend North) State School No. 1936, built in 1877, **and now a private residence,** remains as a reminder of the former settlement.

New state schools were also built in a number of locations, including Lancefield (1876). Rural schools like Big Hill (Benloch) State School No. 2208 opened in 1878 to serve 11 local families in a single-room schoolroom and the Goldie State School No. 1173 opened in 1873 in a single classroom, which was also used for church services. The building was later moved to Kyneton for use as a scout hall (Blake 1973:747).

Rural School No. 87 opened at Ashbourne on two sites: the Upper Campaspe and the Lower Campaspe. Both schools comprised simple huts donated by the landowners and became a part of Ashbourne State School No. 1333 in 1874. A new building for the school was opened on another site in 1901 and operated until 1961 when the school closed (Holth 2014:6, 13, 17).

The American Steam Sawmill School became the Hesket State School No. 1004 in 1879. The school was rebuilt in 1886 (Barned 1983:22-23). The Railway Steam Saw Mills School, which had opened c1870 as Rural School No. 4, became State School No. 1290 in 1872. In 1876, a timber school with quarters and a shingled roof, designed by architect H R Bastow, was relocated from Melbourne to a new site to house the school. From 1879 to 1891, the school was known as the Mount Hope Sawmills School; in 1891 it was renamed Kerrie State School and operated until 1994. It is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register as a rare example of a prefabricated school (VHD 1999, VHR H1631; Barned 1983:30–31)**, but whilst some structures remain, the school was destroyed by a fire in 2021.**

Many of the early schools have survived, with many adapted for new purposes. The long-established Kyneton State School site was closed in 2018, and Kyneton Primary School was moved to new buildings in Edgecombe Street, Kyneton.

Figure 8.9 Gisborne State School, [nd] c1920–50s. (Source: PROV, VPRS 10516/P0001)

Catholic schools

Being a rich agricultural district, the Macedon Ranges Shire attracted a large number of Irish immigrants, which meant that most small and emerging towns established a Catholic school. The first schools were generally modest church–schools, comprising one rudimentary building that served as a church on Sundays and as a school during the week. In 1852 the first Catholic school opened at Kyneton, as it was the earliest centre of population in the Shire. A small Catholic church school, St **Mary's,** opened in Malmsbury in 1856 and was replaced by a larger building in 1865; the school was enlarged in 1873 (MHS, pers com, 2022).

A site for a Catholic school at Lancefield was set aside in 1860 (*VGG*, 1860). A new school building for St **Mary's,** Lancefield, was erected in 1929 to a design by favoured **Catholic church architect P J O'Connor.**

A Catholic school which was also used as a church, opened in Ashbourne in the early 1870s (Holth 2014:7) and a Catholic school was operating at Lauriston by 1865. There was also a Catholic School operating at Riddells Creek by the 1870s.

The Sisters of Mercy opened the Convent High School for girls in Kyneton in 1889, later known as Sacred Heart College. The school moved to purpose-built premises in 1906. The Sisters of Mercy also opened Our **Lady's girls'** school at Woodend in 1889. The school **purchased a former residence, 'Blanchwood', at Woodend in 1903 (***Advocate*, 28 Nov 1914:34). A new school opened on the site in 1972 (Barned 1985:103–105).

The Sisters of Mercy, based on Kyneton, served as teachers at several of the Catholic primary schools in the district, including at Malmsbury (*Advocate*, 13 April 1922:11).

Figure 8.10 **The Sisters of Mercy established a Catholic girls' school in Kyneton in 1889, initially** occupying a former hotel building. (Source: Thomas Carr, *Some of the Fruits of Fifty Years*, 1897)

The Marist Brothers opened a boys' secondary school at Kyneton that taught up to Intermediate level (Year 10). The brothers were accommodated at Rosary House (**'Carrick'**) in Hutton Street, Kyneton (*Advocate*, 29 July 1926:19; Ramsdale 2002:86).

Government secondary schools

From 1888, the newly established Kyneton Technological School leased the disused **Kyneton market building to teach a wide curriculum of classes. In 1890, the school's** name changed to the Kyneton School of Mines, Art and Agriculture, and in c1900, to the Kyneton Technical School. In c1906, the Technical School moved to new purpose-built premises (McKimmie and Strauch 2021:150–51).

Kyneton High School was established in 1912 in the former market building, after it was vacated by the technical school. In 1928 the school was relocated to its current site in Epping Street. In 1966 a technical component was added to the school and it became

known as Kyneton Technical-High School. Today, state secondary colleges operate at Kyneton and Gisborne.

Figure 8.11 Former Kyneton Market building, adapted for use as the Kyneton Technical School. (Source: NTAV Register, B4716)

Figure 8.12 Kyneton High School. (Source: VHR citation H1999)

Private schools

Several private schools operated in Kyneton in the late 1850s. In 1858 the Misses Thompson were operating a school for day pupils and boarders called Lauriston House (*Kyneton Observer*, 12 Jan 1858:1). In 1859, Mrs White established a school in East Kyneton, and Mr and Mrs Forster opened a school at their home in Ebden Street. Mr and Mrs Williams opened Kyneton Seminary in Piper Street, and in 1861 one of their staff, J H Brassnell, opened his own school on the corner of Powlett Street and Hutton Street, using the name Kyneton Grammar School (KHS, pers com, 2022).

Two other private schools operated in Kyneton: Oaklands Boarding School for young ladies, which opened in the former Royal Oak Hotel in 1880, and Prospect House Academy conducted by the Rev G J Richardson from c1870 (McKimmie and Strauch 2021:64; *Kyneton Guardian*, 2 Sept 1871:3; *Argus*, 3 Jan 1880:8). The artist Clara Southern attended the Minerva School for girls in Kyneton in the 1870s (Duke 2006). Misses Thompson and **Haskell's** boarding school (now College House) in Piper Street was built in c1857–1858 to a design by Italian-born architect Andrea Stombuco (Sagazio 1990:12).

Many of these early schools were accommodated in private residences, and many were operated by women, who also took up work as teachers. In the 1850s, Mrs Elizabeth Fleck was principal of her school at 'Campaspe Villa' in Wedge Street, Kyneton. Miss Ray M Begg was also principal of her school in Kyneton in the early 1900s (FoKM 2023). A building believed to have been built for Miss Begg's school can be seen in Epping Street, Kyneton (Bick 1990: 423).

Braemar House at Woodend was built as a guesthouse in the 1890s. In 1919, it was acquired by Clyde School, a private girls' school in Toorak. Clyde School merged with Geelong Grammar School in 1976, and the building then became Braemar College, a private, non-denominational Christian secondary school (Hawkins 1995: np).

Strongly influenced by the Fitzroy Community School in Melbourne, the progressive Candlebark School was opened in Romsey in 2006 by the author and schoolteacher John Marsden. Marsden later opened a secondary school, the Alice Miller School at Macedon, which follows the same ethos as the Candlebark School.

Tye Estate

The 'Koonangoonong' property in Kerrie, established in c1890 on 57 acres by the Thorburn family, was purchased by George Tye in 1914, who increased the holding to 830 acres. In c1928 the property was sold to Tye's brother, Alan Tye, and sister-in-law, Cecelia, who renamed the property 'Wahpeton'. The couple opened the property to visitors after constructing waterfalls and tracks leading to a lookout area and barbeque, huts, and extensive gardens. After the deaths of Alan and Cecelia Tye in 1947–1948, the 'Wahpeton' property and an annual bequest of £10,000 were left to the Victorian Royal Institute for the Blind and the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institute for the purpose of education and training, and rest and recreation (Reid 1992: 142–143). The property was auctioned in 1997 and children's author and schoolteacher John Marsden opened Candlebark School on the site in 2006.

Mechanics institutes

The Mechanics' Institute movement was established in Scotland in 1800 principally for the education and self-improvement of local 'mechanics' (working men). Mechanics' institutes were established in towns across Victoria from the 1850s and provided adult education through lectures and a free library (MIV 2021). This function has now largely been taken over by public libraries.

A number of mechanics' institutes were built in Macedon Ranges Shire, most of which were substantial stone or brick buildings that were often double-storeyed. A Mechanics Institute Society was formed in Kyneton in 1855 (VHR 6166, VHR H1904), and the first mechanics institute in the Macedon Ranges Shire was built there three years later, one of the earliest in the colony. This was followed by a mechanics institute in Gisborne in 1859

and in Woodend in 1862. After it was destroyed by fire, the Woodend Mechanics Institute was replaced in 1873 with a building designed by the notable local architect Louis Boldini. Its façade was not completed, however, until 1893 (Barned 1985: 73).

The Malmsbury Mechanics' Institute was formed in 1862. The former Caroline Chisholm Shelter Shed on the site was renovated for use as council chambers by the Borough of Malmsbury in 1862, and space was granted to the Mechanics' Institute, with the site purchased by the institute in 1871. The two front rooms of the present building were built in 1876 and the Federal Hall at the rear was added in 1895 ('Malmsbury Mechanics Institute', *Monument Australia* 2022).

Farmers and local bush workers met in Lancefield in 1868 to form the Lancefield Mutual Improvement Society, which was later renamed the Lancefield Mechanics' Institute. The foundation stone of the Lancefield Mechanics' Institute was laid in 1877 (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 2: 11–12).

A mechanics' institute was built in Romsey in 1875, with a hall added in 1884 (Woodhouse 2020: 92).

The Newham Mechanics Institute Hall opened in 1903. It was closed briefly in 2009 after extensive renovations. It plays an important role in community life today.

A mechanics' institute was built at Darraweit Guim in 1921 as a memorial to local residents who had served in World War I. A fire that raged through the district in 1969 destroyed the building (Reid 1992: 130).

Other mechanics' institutes in the Shire were built at Bolinda, New Gisborne, and Riddells Creek.

8.3 Providing health and welfare services

Medical care

Early settlers in rural areas of the Port Phillip District were unable to access medical services due to the remoteness of settlements and lack of facilities. Babies were delivered at home with the help of visiting midwives or relatives, with hospitals established in private homes from the 1880s. The site for a proposed hospital was marked on Robert Hoddle's 'Plan for the Village of Kyneton' in 1849. Several years later, the foundation stone for the Kyneton General Hospital, later Kyneton District Hospital, was laid on 16 October 1854 (*Argus*, 23 Oct 1854: 6). The grand two-storey bluestone building, completed in 1856, was one of Victoria's earliest country hospitals. Stonemasons Smith and Rogers constructed the building to the design of architect

Gabriel Fleck. Subsequent additions were made in 1859, 1861, 1864 and 1894. Dr Mary Lane served as the first woman resident medical officer at Kyneton Hospital in 1916–1917 (*Kyneton Guardian*, 15 Sept 1917:2). In 1940 Yuncken, Freeman, Freeman and Griffiths designed a new two-storey, cream brick ward block with a link to the earlier hospital building (VHD 1982, VHR H1684). A new hospital, built in Caroline Chisholm Drive, Kyneton, opened in 2003. The original Kyneton District Hospital was closed in 2005 and has been sold.

Bush nursing hospitals were introduced in Victoria from 1911 to provide essential nursing care in country areas that were isolated from regular medical services. The Commercial Hotel in Lancefield was commandeered in 1919, **during the Spanish 'Flu** pandemic, for use as a private hospital. In 1921, trained midwife Maria Lockwood converted the **building into a small maternity and general hospital named 'Warrawee'. After** efforts to raise funds to open a war memorial hospital in Lancefield, the **'Warrawee' hospital** was purchased for the purpose, and supported by the Bush Nursing Association, this was opened in 1956 (Reid 1992:187). The hospital continued to operate until the early 1990s.

Figure 8.13 Warrawee private hospital, Lancefield. (Source: R&LDHS in *Snapshots in Time*)

Hospitals in small towns were often established in private homes. Elizabeth Pestell, a **trained nurse, opened a private hospital named 'Wenona' in Welsh** Street, Kyneton, in 1914 (*Kyneton Guardian*, 2 May 1914:2**). Nurse Hicks offered midwifery services at** 'Beth-Shan' in Woodend in 1919 (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 4:397).

Blanche Ross-Watt, who was president of the Gisborne Shire Council in 1931, led a campaign to build the Gisborne Cottage Hospital and Maternity Home, which was in operation by 1929. She served on the committee of the Kyneton (District) Hospital for many years (Robertson 2002; *Argus*, 15 June 1929:27). In the mid-1940s, Woodend was served by a small private hospital named 'Sunnyside'. A conference was held at Woodend in 1944 to consider the establishment of a community hospital to serve the Woodend, Romsey and Gisborne districts (*Melton Express*, 2 Sept 1944:1). A bush nursing hospital was opened at Gisborne in 1958 (G&MMDHS 2001:72).

Aged care

Miss Ray M Begg, who was principal of her school in Kyneton in the early 1900s, donated land for the construction of the Ray M Begg homes for the elderly, a charitable community organisation which opened its accommodation in 1959 (FoKM 2023). The organisation became known as R M Begg Kyneton Aged Care and continues to operate an aged care facility in Kyneton.

Figure 8.14 Units provided at the Ray M Begg homes for the elderly in 1970. (Source: Kyneton Shire 1970:13)

Caroline Chisholm shelters

The English philanthropist Caroline Chisholm arrived in Australia in 1838 and worked to support and improve the conditions faced by female immigrants and families. In 1854 she visited the Bendigo diggings and was shocked at the condition of the road between Melbourne and the goldfields, observing the 'vile conditions' that women and children

were subject to and the lack of safe accommodation—this situation made it very difficult for diggers' families to join them on the goldfields (Moloney 2014:69).

To improve this situation, Chisholm established her 'second-class hotels, or "shake-downs", situated at intervals of one day's walk, to provide cheap accommodation and cooking facilities along the route' (Moloney 2014:69). In April 1855, tenders for the erection of ten 'Shelter Sheds' or 'Protection Posts' were advertised in the *Victoria Government Gazette* (Tout-Smith 2003). The sheds were subsequently erected that year at, progressing north from Melbourne, Essendon, The Gap, Gisborne, Keilor, Keilor Plains, Black Forest, Woodend, Carlsruhe, Malmsbury and Elphinstone. Chisholm lived in Kyneton in 1857 until ill-health forced her to depart for Sydney. In 1866 she returned to England where she died in 1877 (Iltis 1966). The Malmsbury shelter later became the site of the Malmsbury Mechanics Institute (*Victorian Places* 2015).

Figure 8.15 Location of a shelter shed marked at the road north of Macedon, c1860 (indicated by red arrow), in Selwyn, Geological Survey of Victoria, No. 6, [1868?]. (Source: National Library Australia, with GML overlay)

Sanitoriums and rest homes

From the late-nineteenth century, the cool, clean mountain air of the Macedon district was believed to offer health benefits to the sick and to convalescing patients. A number

of facilities were established in the district that offered rest and recuperation. Dr Beaney ran a retreat for consumptives at Riddells Creek in 1890 (VMD 1890:450). A facility for the Victorian Sanitorium for Consumptives opened at a private residence on five acres at Mount Macedon in 1898, which offered tuberculosis patients from Echuca some respite from the heat of summer by relocating to a cool summer resort (*Riverine Herald*, 1 March 1898:2; *Argus*, 18 Oct 1902:17). The sanitorium closed in 1908 and in 1910 the government purchased the property with a view to subdividing the land into residential blocks (*Australasian*, 15 Aug 1908:39; ToMelbourne.com.au 2021). A reservoir was constructed during the early 1900s to serve the sanatorium and became known as Sanitorium Lake, which is still in evidence today (Bannear 1997:np). Another tuberculosis sanitorium operated at Hesket (Barned 1983:41).

The Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows opened a convalescent home in Carlisle Street, Woodend, in 1941 for staff members' families to recover from illness and fatigue. The building was sold in 1979 and renovated to reopen as the Bentinck Private Hotel (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 4:146–147). It now operates as a private health centre.

Infant welfare centres

Infant welfare services began in Victoria in 1917 in response to high levels of infant morbidity and mortality. From 1918, baby health centres and infant welfare centres were established at the behest of local groups, such as the Country Women's Association, with the support of the Victorian Baby Health Centres Association, and from 1920, the Society for the Health of the Women and Children of Victoria.

Infant welfare centres were established at Kyneton (by 1929), Woodend (by 1933), Gisborne (by 1943), Lancefield (by 1947); Romsey (by 1948) and Macedon (1953) (GJM Heritage 2022:321). An infant welfare centre also operated at Malmsbury from the Malmsbury Town Hall.

Reformatory institutions

Victoria's child welfare system was made up of both private and public institutional care, and initially relied on churches and charitable organisations.

A Salvation Army home for girls opened at Riddells Creek in 1900 in a former convalescent home, built in 1870 on 41 acres. The Riddells Creek Girls' Home, reported the *Adelaide Advertiser* in 1902, included girls 'recruited' from the Chinese opium dens and other 'vile resorts' in the slums of Melbourne. The newspaper stated that the Home combined rigid discipline with kind treatment in a religious atmosphere. In 1902 the Home housed 40 girls who undertook light gardening work, machine knitting and ornamental needlework. The home operated until 1940 when it was sold into private hands (Goss 1983:71–72; *Find and Connect* 2021).

The Victorian Italianate mansion **'Mintaro'** at Monegeetta was purchased by the Methodist Church around 1890 for use as a Reformatory Home for Girls, which operated until c1914. The girls who were placed here were taught practical skills such as housework, **cooking, laundry and dairy work (VHR citation, 'Mintaro' H2317).**

Animal welfare

Watering horses was essential along the major transport routes and horse troughs were typically supplied outside hotels. A large number of horse troughs were distributed across Victoria in the 1930s by the animal rights activists George and Annis Bills, including examples at Kyneton, Lancefield, Malmsbury, Mount Macedon, Romsey and Woodend.

This was despite the fact that motorised transport was fast becoming the norm by this time. The surviving Bills horse troughs throughout the Shire are a legacy of the public provision of drinking water for horses.

Figure 8.16 Bills water trough, Lancefield. (Source: MRSC 2022)

Figure 8.17 Bills water trough, Malmsbury. (Source: Wikicommons 2018)

8.4 Forming community organisations

In the nineteenth and early twentieth century settlers across the Macedon Ranges Shire formed organisations that set about achieving a common goal or building common ground.

Agricultural societies

Agricultural societies were established in a number of localities to improve farming **knowledge, and to hold shows and ploughing matches. An early farmers' society was established at Gisborne, which was a member branch of the Port Phillip Farmers' Society** (Port Phillip Farmers Society, 1859). A **farmers'** association was established in Kyneton in 1856 and an Agricultural Association Reserve was set aside in 1871. The Kyneton Agricultural Society conducted events at the grounds until the mid-1880s, at which time

it moved to the racecourse. In c1920, the agricultural society purchased a site of 20 acres in Mollison Street, Kyneton, and the first agricultural show was held at the new ground in 1921 (McKimmie and Strauch 2021:115–118).

The West Bourke Agricultural Society was formed by Dr Plummer of Riddells Creek in 1873, with regular meetings held at a number of locations, including Lancefield Junction (Clarkefield), Monegeetta, Riddells Creek, Romsey and Lancefield, where various papers on farming matters were read and discussed (Reid 1992:211). In 1876, William 'Big' Clarke donated land at Lancefield Junction and provided money to build a hall and yards for the Society. Agricultural shows were held at this site until 1895. In 1898, the society was re-formed as the Romsey and West Bourke Agricultural Society (Reid 1992:212).

Boy Scouts and Girl Guides

As part of the worldwide scouting movement, scout groups were established across Victoria from 1908. By 1910, it was estimated that 2000 scout troops had been formed across the state. Girl Guiding commenced in Victoria in 1910.

The first Girl Guide group in Woodend was formed in 1923 and met in St Andrew's Church Hall. Girl Guides also formed a group at Kyneton in the c1920s. Malmsbury had established Brownies and Girl Guides by 1956 (MHS, pers com, 2022). Another group, the 1st Clyde Guide Company was formed in 1961 made up of students at Clyde School (Barned 1985:155). A hall was also built for the 1st Lancefield Girl Guides (TBA Planners 1994, Appendix 1:216).

Early scout groups were formed at Kyneton in 1922 and at Woodend in 1927. A log cabin was built in 1930 to as a meeting place for the Woodend Scout group. A new building opened at the rear of the log cabin in 1981 (Barned 1985:153–154).

Fire brigades

The first volunteer fire brigades in Victoria were established the 1850s. In 1890 under the *Fire Brigade Act* two new boards were created: the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board (MFBB) and the Country Fire Brigades Board (CFBB). The CFBB represented brigades in larger towns such as Ballarat, Geelong and Bendigo. The remainder of rural Victoria was served by Bushfire Brigades, mostly made up of local landowners who received little or no financial assistance from the government. Under the *Country Fire Authority Act* of 1945, rural fire brigades were brought under the control of one of 24 Fire Control Regions.

Fire brigades were established by local community volunteers across the Macedon Ranges Shire, often after the occurrence of a significant fire, of which there have been several.

A fire brigade formed in Kyneton in 1866 and from 1885, the brigade was granted use of the old bluestone police stables. A new timber fire station, designed by architect T W Sutherland was built in 1908 (McKimmie and Strauch 2021:109-11).

Brigades formed included the Lancefield town fire brigade in 1889; the Woodend Fire Brigade in 1898; the Woodend Bushfire Brigade in 1936; the Newham Brigade in 1957 and the Hesket/Kerrie Bushfire Brigade in 1965 (Barned 1985:161). The Malmsbury Fire Brigade was formed in 1929 (MHS, pers com, 2022).

Todays' fire station at Romsey is housed in the former courthouse building, which closed in 2000 (Woodhouse 2020:94).
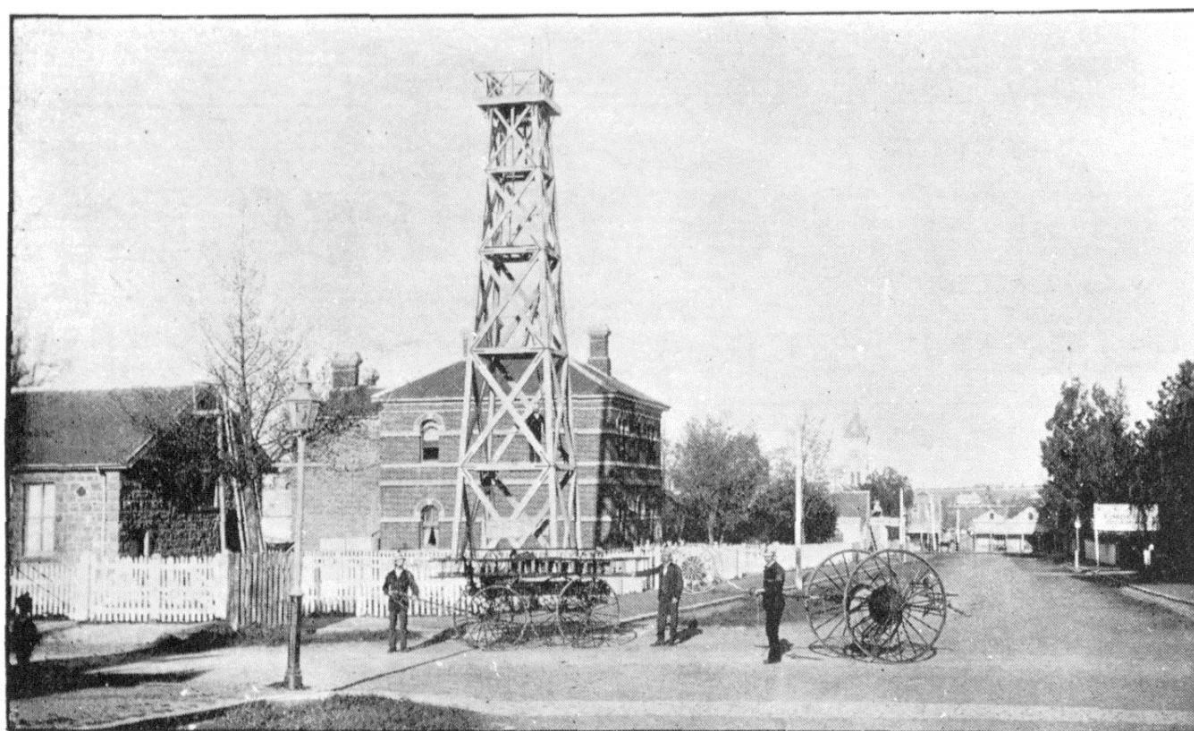
Figure 8.18 Kyneton Fire Brigade Station (former police stables) and the Police Station, c1898. (Source: Kyneton Progress Association, *Illustrated Guide & Map to Kyneton & Surrounding Districts*, 1898)

Fraternities

Freemasonry was introduced from Britain, which led to masonic lodges established across Victoria; membership was male only and largely limited to Protestants. Freemasons abide by a set of values based on ethics, morality, philosophy, personal development and community service (Barnes 2008). Other fraternities included the Oddfellows and Rechabites which were similar to Freemasons but tended to attract a lower-middle-class or working-class membership.

Lodges established in Macedon Ranges Shire include the Loyal Woodend Lodge No. 5365—Manchester Unity IOOF, which opened in 1871 (Barned 1985:77); the Woodend Masonic Lodge established in 1926 (Barned 1985:79); the Diogenes Lodge No. 180—RAOB opened in 1949 in Kyneton (Barned 1985:80); the Romsey Masonic Lodge opened in 1883 (Woodhouse 2020:4); and the Lancefield Masonic Lodge in 1884 (Reid 1992:207). Many lodge buildings are in still in existence. Two lodges met at the Malmsbury Mechanics Institute; these were the Independent Order of Rechabites (c1869–1943) and the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (c1888) (MHS, pers com, 2022).

A Gisborne Lodge was formed in 1858, and then was re-formed in 1920. A meeting hall was built in 1921 (Nelsen 2017:74–75). The Zetland Lodge in Kyneton was established in 1859 and occupied a number of different premises over the following decades, including the Masonic Hall and the Oddfellows Hall. It acquired the Manchester Unity Oddfellows Hall in Piper Street in 1905 and this was decorated with painted murals on its four internal walls by artist Thomas Fisher Levick (KHS, pers com, 2022).

Red Cross

In August 1914, at the outbreak of World War I, Lady Helen Munro Ferguson (later Viscountess Novar), wife of the Governor-General, established the Australian Red Cross as a branch of the British Red Cross Society. With its headquarters in Melbourne, the Red Cross assisted sick and wounded soldiers in all medical areas, providing comforts, staff and repatriation facilities, both at home and overseas. Its membership was largely female (Oppenheimer 2008). Funds were raised by local Red Cross groups in a number of ways, including through the making of signature quilts (Oppenheimer 2014:36). One such signature quilt was made by the Romsey Red Cross in 1916–18.

Figure 8.19 The Romsey Red Cross signature quilt made in 1916–18. (Source: Oppenheimer 2014:36)

A number of Red Cross groups were established across the region, including at Darraweit Gum, Gisborne, Kyneton, Lancefield, Malmsbury, Mount Macedon, Riddells Creek, Romsey and Woodend.

Blanche Ross-Watt formed a branch of the Red Cross at Gisborne during World War I and remained an active member until her death in 1956 (Robertson 2002). The Kyneton Red Cross continued to operate in 1970 (Kyneton Shire 1970:15).

In 2014, a number of Red Cross groups had achieved 100 years of unbroken service, including groups at Lancefield and Romsey (Oppenheimer 2014:298). Today, the Red Cross groups that continue to operate in the Shire are Woodend and Lancefield–Romsey.

Returned Services League

The **Returned Servicemen's** Association of Victoria was the first of the organisations of returned servicemen formed during 1915-16 in Australia. At a meeting in Melbourne in **June 1916 the Returned Soldiers' and Sailors' Imperial League of Australia (RSSILA),** later known as the RSL, was formed. RSLs were instrumental in advocating for the needs of returned servicemen and women.

RSL sub-branches were formed in many townships of the Macedon Ranges Shire, including at Woodend in 1915, where an RSL Hall was opened in 1955 (Barned 1985:157). A sub-branch of the RSL was established in Kyneton in 1918 with clubrooms provided at the former Kyneton **Men's** Christian Association rooms, which were renovated and opened in December 1918. From 1948, the RSL met in the Drill Hall in Market Street, Kyneton (McKimmie and Strauch 2021:198). The Kyneton Memorial RSL Club Rooms were opened by the Governor, Sir Dallas Brooks, on 28 May 1954. Plaques were later installed at the building to mark the 50th Anniversary of the end of World War II **and to honour Australians who served in the Vietnam War ('Kyneton Memorial RSL Club',** *Monument Australia* 2022).

Figure 8.20 Kyneton Memorial RSL Clubrooms. (Source: Victorian War Heritage Inventory, Place ID 155758)

Country Women's Association

Inaugurated in March 1928, the Victorian branch of the Country **Women's** Association (CWA) develops the skills and addresses the problems of women living on the land.

Twenty branches of the CWA were formed during its first year, with many of the **members having defected from the Women's Section of the Victorian Country Party** (Swain 2008). Two of their early objectives were to assist bush nursing hospitals and infant welfare centres (Barned 1985:155).

CWA groups formed in many towns in the Shire in the late 1920s and 1930s. A CWA hall was built at Mount Macedon in 1929 for the newly formed Macedon branch. From 1946, a **women's health service operated from this building (G&MMDHS 2009:111). There were** also branches of the CWA formed at Romsey and Lancefield.

To celebrate 21 years of the CWA in Romsey a cairn was erected in 1959, alongside trees planted in honour of members. The cairn is located at the corner of Barry and William streets, Romsey (Woodhouse 2020:120). Another CWA memorial and plantation is the Centenary Memorial and trees in Woodend, which are located in the reserve opposite the railway station (TBA Planners 1994, Vol 4:44).

Other women's clubs

The Kyneton Business and Professional **Women's** Club operated in the 1950s and was still in existence in 1970 (Museums Victoria; Kyneton Shire 1970:15). The Kyneton Zonta Club was formed in 1994 and continues today (Zonta Club of Kyneton 2018). Zonta International, which has groups worldwide, is an organisation of professionals empowering women through service and advocacy.

Public halls

Public halls, town halls, church halls and other kinds of halls have played an integral role in the community life of the many localities within Macedon Ranges Shire, serving as community meeting places and venues for a range of social activities. They were generally managed by a local committee or organisation or the local council, and were often built and maintained, at least in part, through community efforts and fund-raising. The larger centres of population had the greatest number of halls in the Shire. In Kyneton in the 1930s there was a shire hall, a mechanics hall, a temperance hall, and an **Oddfellows' hall, as well as numerus church halls (***Age***,** 25 Jan 1936:25).

A hall was built in Ashbourne in the early 1870s, as part of the Catholic school/church. The hall housed dances, euchre evenings, farewell parties, singing, and wedding receptions (Holth 2014:7–10).

A start was made on the construction of a public hall at Riddells Creek in 1875 before funds ran out. It was completed in later years with the aid of a government grant and other funds (Goss 1983:73).

Jubilee Hall opened in Macedon in 1898. It was destroyed in the 1983 Ash Wednesday bushfires but was rebuilt in 1990 (G&MMDHS 2009:110).

Local town halls were also used for a range of public meetings and social needs. A supper room was added to the Malmsbury Town Hall in the late 1880s for social gatherings. In the 1940s a projection room was added to the building so that films could be shown (Stevens 1987: 48, 50).

Today, public halls exist at Baynton, Bolinda, Bullengarook, Kyneton, Lauriston, Macedon, Tylden and Woodend.

8.5 Preserving traditions and commemorating

Honouring those killed in war

Residents of most localities in Macedon Ranges Shire commemorated their community's war service, including the Boer War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War. A range of war memorials have been established, such as obelisks, cairns, fountains, statues, honour boards, memorial halls and memorial gates. In more recent years, Lone Pines and Oaks from Gallipoli have been planted in many public places across the Shire.

Memorial obelisks and cairns were also erected after World War I, many of which have had additional plaques added to commemorate those residents who served in later conflicts. World War I memorials to commemorate local residents who served were erected in Lancefield in 1919, Woodend (1919), Gisborne (1922), Romsey in 1923, and Kyneton in (1927) (*Monument Australia* 2023).

War memorials also had a functional use. A war memorial clock tower made of reinforced concrete was built in Woodend in 1927-28 to commemorate the men of the Newham and Woodend Shire who served in World War I (*Argus*, 15 Sept 1928: 6). The tower was built by Charles Peeler to a design by architects Harold C Trigg and Douglas McCalman ('War Memorial Clock Tower', *Monument Australia* 2022).

A memorial drinking fountain was erected in 1919 at the Macedon State School to commemorate the signing of the Treaty of Versailles on 28 June 1919, which concluded the peace treaty of World War I (*Sunbury News*, 31 May 1919: 2). A war memorial that commemorated former scholars of Kyneton State School No. 343 who served in World War I was erected in the school grounds in 1922. The school has since been located to another site (*Argus*, 29 May 1922: 6).

Memorial gates to commemorate those who served in World War I were erected adjoining the Malmsbury Town Hall at the entrance to the Malmsbury Botanic Gardens, which were unveiled in 1922 (*Argus*, 20 April 1922: 10). Memorial Gates were also erected at Gardiner Reserve in Gisborne to commemorate those who served in World

War II. At the instigation of the Romsey Progress Association, memorial gates were erected at the Romsey Park Recreation Reserve in 1952 to commemorate local residents who had served and lost their lives in World War I and World War II (Woodhouse 2020:121).

The Darraweit Guim Memorial Hall, measuring 40 x 25 foot, opened in 1921 to commemorate 38 local men who served in World War I, all of whom returned home (*Kilmore Free Press*, 26 May 1921:3).

In 1935, a granite World War I memorial drinking fountain was erected in Gisborne for McGregor soldiers by the McGregor family (*Age*, 29 Jan 1935:9).

Avenues of honour were planted in the Shire to commemorate the sacrifice and service of local volunteers during World War I. From 1917 to 1921, Victorians planted more than 300 avenues of honour. The tree species planted were predominantly exotics. Although such avenues were also planted in other states of Australia, they were most popular in Victoria (National Trust 2014; Haddow 1988:306–309). An avenue of honour, comprising 154 oak trees, was planted at Macedon in 1918 (G&MMDHS 2009:121). Other avenues of honour were planted at Kyneton, Gisborne, New Gisborne, Tylden and Woodend (Context 2021).

In 1935 a large-scale cross was erected near the summit of Mount Macedon as a memorial to soldiers who died in World War I. The glazed tile cross rose 21 metres, and a tourist road was built to reach it. It was built through funds provided largely by local resident William Cameron and its construction provided work for the unemployed (*Argus*, 9 July 1932:23). The cross was damaged by lightning in 1986, and water penetration corroded the steel framework. The cross was subsequently demolished and replaced in 1995 by a matching cross made of in pre-cast concrete (*Age*, 20 May 1995:4).

Figure 8.21 Memorial clock tower erected at Woodend in 1927-28 in memory of the soldiers from Woodend who lost their lives in World War I. (Source: *Argus*, 15 Sept 1928)

Figure 8.22 Woodend War Memorial, c1919. (Source: Australian War Memorial, Accession No. H17684)

Remembering others

A cairn and **tablet were erected in Gisborne in 1915 by the Gisborne Old Boys'** Association to commemorate pastoralist Henry Howey who took up land in the area in 1837. A bust of Howey (a gift of the family) was unveiled on 31 January 1927 (*Woodend Star*, 29 Jan 1927:1). A memorial cairn to local squatter Alexander Mollison was erected in Malmsbury and marks the approximate location of his Colliban homestead.

Explorers who journeyed through the Macedon Ranges Shire were commemorated by monuments and plaques in the 1920s and 1930s. In 1936, 35 cairns or tablets were erected across Victoria to commemorate the centenary of Surveyor-General Thomas **Mitchell's expedition through the Port Phillip District. As part of this project, a** memorial cairn was erected in Kyneton (**'Major** Thomas Mitchell **Expedition',** *Monument Australia* 2022; *Age*, 30 Oct 1936:17).

Severe bushfires in the Shire have inspired a number of memorials. A ten-metre-high stained-glass window titled 'From the Fire' crafted by artist Leonard French and installed in the Church of Resurrection at Macedon depicts the devastation and loss of life caused by the Ash Wednesday fires of 1983 and the later regeneration and new life (*Age*, 15 May 1998:16). To commemorate the Black Saturday fires of 2009 a mosaic mural by artist **Kathryn Portelli called 'AFTER: Art from the Extended Region' was installed in** 2010 at the Kyneton Town Hall. The fires burnt out the localities north of Kyneton where many

homes and a church were destroyed ('Black Saturday Bushfires', *Monument Australia* 2022).

In 1996, the Gisborne and Mount Macedon Districts Historical Society created Gisborne Pioneer Park to commemorate the work of early district pioneers. A seat at Kyneton, installed in 1966 by the Kyneton Historical Society, and a plaque at Woodend commemorate early philanthropist Caroline Chisholm, who was known as **'the emigrant's friend' ('Caroline Chisholm',** *Monument Australia* 2022).

Other historical achievements in the Shire have been commemorated, for example the 150th anniversary of the construction of the Malmsbury Reservoir in 2016.

Celebrating local history

There have been a number of significant historical celebrations in the towns of the Macedon Ranges Shire. Schools, churches and local organisations have celebrated major milestones with special events and often produced a booklet for the occasion.

As one of the earliest settled areas in Victoria, Kyneton celebrated the Victoria's centenary celebrations with its own Centenary of Kyneton celebrations. This included a range of activiti**es and also encouraged tourism to the town. A raft of 'back to'** celebrations were also held across the Shire through the 1920s and 1930s, including at Gisborne, Kyneton and Lancefield. These events were community organised events, and served the dual purpose of celebrating the past and attracting visitors to give towns an economic boost.

The Kyneton Museum established in the 1970s, preserves a large collection of historical items from the local area that contribute to our understanding of the past. The Willis Steam Flour Mill in Kyneton was opened as a working museum in the 1980s.

8.6 Marking the phases of life

Early burial places

Before the establishment of formal cemeteries, burial sites were established wherever people lived and worked, including on pastoral runs that were occupied by settlers from the mid to late 1830s. The private burial ground of the Robertson family survives at the Wooling estate, New Gisborne (VHI). There were also a number of makeshift graves and unmarked burial sites along the main roads during the gold rush when many people perished on route to the diggings. Several early writers mentioned seeing human remains along the road in the Black Forest (Moloney 2014: 70). Other burials occurred in the early settlements. The grave of John White, a worker at the former Carlsruhe Inn who died in 1849, can be seen today at the former inn site (Boxshall 2017: 20).

Cemeteries

The first cemeteries or temporary burial grounds were often set aside before the official survey of a township. In 1854 an *Act for the Establishment and Management of Cemeteries in the Colony of Victoria* was passed, under which the government had the power to appoint and remove trustees and to lend or pay money for the establishment and management of cemeteries. Local cemeteries were formalised through gazettal notices and local trustees appointed, usually representing the different religious denominations.

In the early to mid-nineteenth century, the layout of cemeteries changed in colonial countries like Australia and there was a shift from burial grounds to park-like cemeteries that were laid out in a garden setting. In Victoria, public cemeteries were divided into sections based on religious denomination. They often featured serpentine paths, chapels, gate lodges, and rest pavilions. Evergreen plantings, such as cypress and pine trees, had symbolic meaning, as did many of the flowers planted (Sagazio 2008). Today, cemetery grounds, in addition to exotic plantings, often retain areas of significant remnant native vegetation.

The following public cemeteries were established in Macedon Ranges Shire: Kyneton (1855), Gisborne (1858), Malmsbury (1859), Tylden (1860), Macedon (1860), Woodend (1861), Carlsruhe (1862), Lancefield (1863), Riddells Creek (1866), and Darraweit Guim (1871). These cemeteries continue to operate today.

Figure 8.23 Entrance to the Riddells Creek Cemetery, c1992. (Source: Graeme Butler, via Flickr)

9 Shaping cultural and creative life

9. Shaping cultural and creative life

Many places in Macedon Ranges Shire have contributed to the development of cultural pursuits, including the arts, sport and recreation, which have played an important role in shaping the history, identity and self-expression of the Shire, its people and its many communities. The arts have played a vital role in its development and a number of notable artists and collections have connections and associations to Macedon Ranges Shire.

9.1 Participating in sport and recreation

Macedon Ranges Shire has provided a range of places for sport and recreation. The forests and bushland of the Shire have provided opportunities for outdoor activities, such as picnicking, sightseeing, bushwalking, fossicking, hunting, horse-riding, trail-bike-riding and orienteering. In addition, the rivers and reservoirs provide areas for fishing and swimming and areas of scenic or special interest are popular with sightseers, walkers and picnickers. Public reserves have also been provided for a range of formalised recreational and sporting activities.

Open space

Botanic gardens

Four botanical gardens have been established in the Macedon Ranges Shire: at Malmsbury, Kyneton, Woodend and Gisborne.

The Kyneton Botanic Gardens was first established in 1858 on an 18-acre reserve beside the Campaspe River. The site was later enlarged to 24 acres. Later developments at the gardens included a fish hatchery.

The Malmsbury Botanic Gardens were laid out in 1863 on 15 acres of a flood-prone area beside the Coliban River. The original layout incorporated a lake and islands. Plants were provided by Mueller at the Melbourne Botanic Gardens. In 1984 the gardens were restored and several rare trees were identified (Gilfedder 2002; VMCP).

A reserve was also set aside for botanical gardens at Woodend in 1863 (Boxshall 2017:133). The reserve, comprising 24 acres of land north of the racecourse, was surveyed in 1869 and a large number of trees were supplied by Von Mueller (*Kyneton*

Observer, 23 Feb 1869:3, 3 Aug 1875:2; VMCP). The site was allocated for use by a golf club in the early 1900s.

The Gisborne Botanic Gardens were established in 1992 with a focus on Australian and New Zealand plants (Davies 2019:66–75).

Figure 9.1 Postcard view of the Malmsbury Botanic Gardens, c1920. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H91.197/1)

Figure 9.2 Malmsbury Gardens. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. RWP/A11.161)

Public parks

From the 1850s, public recreation reserves were provided in most towns and villages and these have been the focus for a wide range of recreational uses. Portions of ground in local recreation reserves were also sought by local sporting clubs, who lobbied for facilities such as cricket grounds, bowling greens and tennis courts. The development and management of public parks and recreation reserve has largely rested with the various local councils. Local nurserymen and the Macedon State Nursery contributed to the planting of these reserves.

Recreational activities

Enjoying the outdoors

A number of beauty spots in the Macedon Ranges Shire have attracted visitors for sight-seeing and picnicking since the period of early pastoral settlement. Popular destinations **included the Black Hills, near Kyneton; Hanging Rock; the Camel's Hump**, Mount Macedon Memorial Cross and Sanitorium Lake, Mount Macedon; and the falls on Turitable Creek at Stanley Park at Mount Macedon.

The Beattie family regularly held picnics at their property 'Ettrick Bank' near Mount Aitken (Butler 2009: 132). Large community picnics were also organised, for example by church groups.

Figure 9.3 Etching titled *The Pic Nic Party at Mount Macedon* by Nicholas Chevalier, 1868. (Source: National Library of Australia)

Swimming

Public baths opened on the Campaspe River at Kyneton in 1860. Other rivers and creeks in the Shire were also used for swimming as were the Lauriston Reservoir and Malmsbury Reservoir

In 1914, a weir was built on the Coliban River at Kyneton, behind the Kyneton Hospital, to create more formal baths. Subsequently, swimming lessons were provided and swimming clubs were established. In the 1920s, a second weir was built upstream. The area was improved with the planting of exotic trees and the construction of swimming facilities, including changing rooms and a diving tower. A new public swimming pool opened in Kyneton in 1958**, but has since been decommissioned though the turnstil gates remain** (McKimmie and Strauch 2021: 167–170). **Swimming is now catered for at the Kyneton Toyota Sports and Aquatic Centre. Construction began in 2010 and was completed in 2012.**

Gisborne's first swimming pool was located near Kilmore Road, adjacent to the Jackson Creek Reserve. A new swimming pool was built at Gisborne in 1984 (G&MMDHS

2001:96-97). This was replaced in 2005 by the Gisborne Aquatic Centre, which was designed by William Ross Architects.

The Lancefield and District Memorial Pool was built in the 1950s and Woodend has had a swimming pool operating in some form since the 1920s.

Sport

Some of the first sports to be organised by settler communities in the Macedon Ranges Shire were cricket and horse-racing. Early sporting events were held in farmers' paddocks before formal public recreation grounds were reserved and occupancy granted to different sporting clubs.

Bowling and croquet

The Kyneton Bowling and Croquet Club was established in 1876 and the Woodend Bowling Club c1891 (Kyneton Bowling Club 2023). Later bowling clubs were formed in the 1960s at Gisborne, Lancefield and Romsey (Barned 1985:141, 144). The Gisborne & District Bowling Club was formed in 1962.

Cricket

The Kyneton Cricket Club was formed in 1855 and remains active. The Malmsbury Cricket Club was re-established in 1858 and a cricket ground reserved in 1878 (*Kyneton Observer*, 2 Oct 1858:2; Malmsbury Historical Society). The Woodend Cricket Club was established in 1861 (Boxshall 2017:145).

There was a Bullengarook cricket club team active in the 1870s and 1880s, and this was revived in the 1930s (*Bacchus Marsh* Express, 1 Aug 1874, 4 Dec 1886, and 16 Dec 1933).

While competition cricket was typically restricted to male players, female cricketers in Couangalt defied convention to form their own team, playing from the early 1900s until World War I (Butler 2009:131).

Football

Australian Rules football teams were formed at Kyneton in 1868 and at Woodend in 1872. Other teams were formed at Hesket in 1873 and Newham and Rochford in 1874.

By the early 1880s, clubs were established at Gisborne, Lancefield, Riddells Creek and Romsey (Barned 1985:145), and also at Bullengarook. The Ashbourne football team played on a paddock on the Kellett property in the 1940s (Holth 2014:72).

Golf

Golf was first played near Woodend on the property of Dr Leon Jona at the foothills of Mount Macedon. The present golf course in Woodend, Golf Course Hill, was occupied by the Woodend Golf Club from 1903. Although modified, the original clubhouse, constructed prior to 1918, forms part of the present-day clubhouse. A pine plantation was planted at the rear of the clubhouse in 1932 (Barned 1985:148).

In the 1920s, 'The Golf House' was built at Mount Macedon for a Scotsman named Murray to provide his Melbourne friends with a nine-hole golf course and accommodation (G&MMDHS 2009:80).

The Kyneton Golf Club was founded in 1900 and an 18-hole course was laid out on a site at Three Chain Road in Kyneton. In 1909, the club moved to a more suitable site off Baynton Road where a nine-hole course was developed, and this remained in use until 1928 (Kyneton Golf Club 2022). An 18-hole course was designed and opened in 1929 on 115 acres of land leased on the then Calder Highway near the site of the original course. When the leased land was sold at auction in 1949, the club purchased 152 acres of on the west side of Blackhill Road (Kyneton Golf Club 2022). The well-known golf course architect Vernon Morcom, who had designed courses at Kingston Heath (in Melbourne), Spring Valley and Barwon Heads, was commissioned to design the new course. Using **Morcom's** design and voluntary labour, the course was built and opened for play in 1950 (Kyneton Golf Club 2022).

The clubhouse from the previous course (and possibly from the course before that) was transported and rebuilt on the new site. The club remains at the Blackhill Road site to the present day (Kyneton Golf Club 2022).

The Malmsbury **Common was once used for golf, when a** Golf Club **was started** in 1908**,** (*Argus*, 28 May 1908:5) and golf links at Carlsruhe were established c1900s (Kyneton Progress Association 1898). The Gisborne Golf Club was established in 1922.

Horse-racing

The first recorded horse races in Macedon Ranges Shire were run at Kyneton on Christmas Day, 1852. This was followed by a steeplechase in May 1853 and a four-day race meeting in March 1858. The Kyneton Jockey Club was formed in June 1858 and held a three-day meeting in March 1859 (KHS, pers com, 2022). The Kyneton Racecourse was **described in 1936 as 'one of the finest country racecourses in the Commonwealth'** (*Age*, 25 Jan 1936:25)

Early races were also held at Malmsbury in 1861. The Malmsbury and Taradale Racing Club formed in 1873, with the racecourse, reserved in 1867, also used as a recreation reserve. The Malmsbury Youth Training Centre, built in 1965, currently occupies the former racecourse site (Stevens 1987:67–69).

A racecourse reserve was set aside at Riddells Creek in 1864. The first meeting of the Romsey Racing Club was held in 1883 on the recreation reserve (Reid 1992:215).

A racecourse was reserved at Gisborne in 1866, but de-licensed in 1933. The reserve has been protected as an important wetland environment, known as **the 'Gisborne Racecourse Marshland Reserve' (G&**MMDHS, pers com, 2022).

A racecourse was established at Lancefield by the 1870s, where the St **Patrick's** Day race meeting featured as an important event in the local racing calendar.

The Woodend Hunt Club was the forerunner to the Woodend Race Club founded in Woodend in 1860, with the first racecourse established on Racecourse Hill, now Golf Course Hill. The racecourse was moved to its current site in 1903 (Barned 1985:12, 138-39). A bandstand to commemorate J C Keating, secretary of the Woodend Racing Club and Hanging Rock Racing Club who died in 1924, was erected in Woodend Park in 1927 (**'J C Keating',** *Monument Australia* 2022). The Woodend Race Club was closed in 1982 and amalgamated with Kyneton Race Club (Barned 1985:138, 141).

Horse-racing took place at the base of Hanging Rock on an unofficial basis from the 1870s. The Hanging Rock Racing Club was formed in 1885 and the first official race meeting was held on New **Year's** Day, 1886 (Country Racing Victoria). Race meetings **continue today on New Year's Day and** Australia Day.

Figure 9.5 The Hanging Rock races, photographed by Sydney Johnson, c.1910s. (Source: National Library of Australia)

The Romsey Racing Club formed in 1883, holding races at Romsey Park Recreation Ground until the 1920s, by which time it was known as the Romsey Amateur Turf Club (Woodhouse 2020:121).

Tennis

A number of the grand houses at Mount Macedon laid tennis courts from the 1880s, when the game first became fashionable. Tennis courts were also provided in public parks in most townships. The Woodend Tennis Club was formed in 1890.

Other sports

Other sporting activities included hunting, coursing (dog racing) and rifle shooting, as well as netball and athletics.

In 1933, the Harold Thompson Memorial Fund in Woodend installed a memorial cycling track in the recreation reserve and erected a tablet in memory of Harold Thompson who had died in an accident in August 1932. Two stone markers remain at the site today ('Harold Thompson', *Monument Australia* 2022).

9.2 Nurturing a vibrant arts scene

The arts have played a vital role in the development of Macedon Ranges Shire and have been supported by societies and clubs which aimed to promote camaraderie between professional artists and knowledgeable interest among collectors and enthusiasts. The nineteenth century saw the formation of a number of clubs designed to celebrate and promote literature, music, theatre and the visual arts.

Music

There have been a range of musical groups active in the Shire. In Malmsbury a Philharmonic Society was formed in 1874, and in later years a town band was established (Stevens 1987: 70). By the late nineteenth century, Romsey boasted the Romsey Choir and a Christy Minstrel Group, and Lancefield featured a Glee Club and minstrel group (Reid 1992: 205).

Brass bands were formed in many towns and played a key part in local events. The Kyneton Municipal Brass Band, established in 1854, is one of the longest-running musical groups in Victoria. It continues to play an important part in the local Anzac Day commemorations, Christmas celebrations**, citizenship ceremonies** and other events.

Theatre

Theatre groups were established to provide local entertainment. The Woodend Dramatic **Society formed in 1862 to raise funds for the Mechanics' Institute Hall (Barned** 1985: 166), and an Amateur Dramatic Society was formed in Malmsbury in 1868 (Stevens 1987: 70). In the early 1890s, Williamson, Garner and Musgrove from **Melbourne's Theatre Royal purchased land in the Riddell**s Creek district where they **established an 'actor's retreat' (Reid 1992:207).**

In 1951, the Happy Wanderers Concert Party was established in Woodend to raise money for the local communities of the Shire (Barned 1985: 166). The Mount Players Theatre formed in 1972, and in 1975 leased the Macedon Presbyterian Church. The theatre was destroyed in the Ash Wednesday fires of February 1983. A new Mountview Theatre was built on the site and opened in 1990. The Mount Players Youth Theatre was formed in 2007 (Mount Players 2022).

The Bluestone Theatre, which is a former Congregational church built in 1859, is home to the Kyneton Theatre Company.

9.3 Achieving distinction in the arts

Artists

A number of notable artists have connections and associations with Macedon Ranges Shire. Margaret Pestell was a noted watercolour artist of many local buildings. The impressionist painter Clara Southern was born and educated in Kyneton. The artist Polly Hurry was also born in Kyneton.

From c1912, students from the National Gallery School stayed at Ellis's Coliban Water and Steam Mill in Malmsbury during holiday periods (Jones 1990:146).

Thomas Fisher Levick was also a noted artist in his time and at one time was the Art Master at the Working Men's College, later RMIT. He was a member of the Zetland Masonic Lodge in Kyneton where he undertook a large-scale painting project for the interior of the building. Commencing in 1906, he painted murals on all four walls (KHS, pers com, 2022).

The scenery of the Macedon Ranges Shire has provided subject matter for some of the most accomplished artists working in Victoria. The distinctive shape of Mount Macedon itself, the dramatic form of Hanging Rock, and other scenic locations in the wider area have been the subject of well-known landscape works. In 1936 it was noted that the scenic beauties of Kyneton made it 'a favourite resort for artists' (*Age*, 25 Jan 1936:25).

Figure 9.6 John Skinner Prout, *Mount Macedon*, 1847. (Source: National Library of Australia)

In the nineteenth century the Swiss-born artist Louis Buvelot produced some fine sketches and paintings of scenes at Mount Macedon and the English painter William Ford produced *At the Hanging Rock* (1875).

Figure 9.7 Louis Buvelot, *At Mount Macedon 1872* (1872). (Source: National Gallery of Victoria)

Figure 9.8 Louis Buvelot, *Macedon Ranges* (1874). (Source: National Gallery of Victoria)

Figure 9.9 William Ford, *At the Hanging Rock* (1875). (Source: National Gallery of Victoria)

Among the artists who have lived in the Macedon Ranges Shire, the impressionist Frederick McCubbin (1855–1917) is probably the most notable. In 1901 McCubbin purchased an English-style cottage on a four-acre allotment on the north side of Mount Macedon, which he called **'Fontainebleau'. He** spent time here painting and undertook most of the work of his famous triptych, *The Pioneer*, in the nearby bush (VHR H1980). This work, in the **collection of the National Gallery of Victoria, is one** Australia's best-loved paintings.

Figure 9.11 **A painting of 'Fontainbleau' by** Frederick McCubbin. (Source: Fontainbleau citation, VHR H1980)

Figure 9.10 **The first panel of McCubbin's** triptych, *The Pioneer* (1904), painted in the **bush at 'Fontainbleau', Mount** Macedon. (Source: National Gallery of Victoria)

The wildflower artist Ellis Rowan (1848–1922) died at Macedon and is buried in the Macedon Cemetery. She spent much time at Mount Macedon, where her **family's** property **'Derriweit Heights' is thought to contributed to her passion for wildflowers** (NLA, Ellis Rowan).

Figure 9.12 *Ellis Rowan's Garden at Derriweit*, Mount Macedon, painted by Ellis Rowan, 1885. (Source: National Library of Australia)

Writers

Many colonial chroniclers wrote of their impressions of the landscape of the Macedon Ranges Shire, in particular the Black Forest, Mount Macedon and Hanging Rock. Others have used the landscape as the setting in fictional works. Hanging Rock, most famously, was the inspiration for the literary work *Picnic at Hanging Rock* (1975) by Joan Lindsay, and the prize-winning feature film of the same name. The poet Vincent Buckley drew on his upbringing in an Irish Catholic family on a farm at Springfield in many of his works, including *Cutting Green Hay* (1983).

Barbara Armstrong worked as a journalist and became the owner of the *Kyneton Guardian* after her father died. She was also the editor of *The Woman*, which was the official organ of the conservative-minded Australian Women's National League.

Notable collections have been developed in the Macedon Ranges area. Judge Arthur Chomley's residence, built in 1899 at Riddells Creek, for example, was acquired by the Manton family to house a distinguished Australian art collection and subsequently by booksellers Court and Joyce Oldmeadow. They renamed it 'Dromkeen' and it became the permanent home of a children's book collection and related artwork. The property was bought by Ashton Scholastics in 1985 (Reid 1992:114).

There are a number of more tenuous connections of several writers to the Macedon Ranges Shire. The Darlington run at Baynton was associated with Captain Sylvester John Brown and his son Thomas Alexander Browne, who wrote the novel *Robbery Under Arms* under the pseudonym 'Rolf Boldrewood'. Darlington run was also associated with Dr Robert Baynton who was married to the author Barbara Baynton, author of *Bush Studies*, although it's not known if she ever lived in the area.

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Background to the report

Background to the report

Overview

In December 2021, Macedon Ranges Shire Council engaged GML Heritage (GML) to prepare a Thematic Environmental History (TEH) of the Macedon Ranges Shire.

To date, there has been no existing TEH of the Macedon Ranges Shire, which has limited the ability of Council to identify, assess and protect heritage places within the municipality. Council recognised the need for a TEH to ensure that strategic heritage planning could be undertaken with a strong understanding of the land use history and development of the municipality.

Project scope and approach

A Thematic Environmental History is a report developed for a municipality or local government area (LGA) that serves as a tool in heritage planning. The purpose of the thematic history is to identify and understand the key historical themes in the development of a municipality which will assist in identifying and assessing heritage places within an LGA.

The scope of the project included researching and writing a TEH of the Macedon Ranges Shire, which outlines the historical development of the area from European settlement through to the present day. The TEH traces the development of the area, noting the key developments, influences and important events that have shaped the character of the Macedon Ranges Shire.

This work builds on previous heritage reports prepared for the former municipalities of the Shire of Kyneton and the Shires of Gisborne, Newham and Woodend, and Romsey comprising Macedon Ranges area. These reports are:

- Volume 2 'Background History, Architecture and Architects, Bibliography' by Susan Priestley, 'Shire of Kyneton Conservation (Heritage) Study' (1990); and
- Volume 2 'Environmental History' by Dr Chris McConville, 'Macedon Ranges Cultural Heritage and Landscape Study' (1994).

The following key tasks have informed the development of this report:

- identifying key resources and developing a list of for the project;
- investigating the historical development (i.e. social, physical and economic change) of the Macedon Ranges Shire, through historical research;

- sourcing historical maps and plans, and historical images of Macedon Ranges Shire;
- receiving input from the Macedon Ranges Shire Council officers and key stakeholders regarding historical themes and places of potential heritage significance; and
- identifying the relevant historical themes for the Macedon Ranges Shire, using *Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes.*

This report includes some background on the rich Aboriginal heritage of Macedon Ranges and the wider area, but this is limited as a full investigation into this subject was not possible.

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- Larina Strauch, Kyneton Historical Society (KHS)
- Ronda Walker, Friends of Kyneton Museum (FoKM)
- Dr Susan Walter, Malmsbury Historical Society (MHS)
- Jannyse Williams, Woodend and District Heritage Society (W&DHS)
- Dr Fay Woodhouse, Romsey and Lancefield Districts Historical Society (R&LDHS)
- We would particularly like to thank the volunteers and community members who provided input.

Project team

This report was authored by Dr Robyn Ballinger of History Making Pty Ltd with input from Dr Helen Doyle and Freya Keam of GML.

Study area

The municipal area of the Macedon Ranges Shire is shown below:

Map of the Macedon Ranges Shire, showing the respective areas of the three relevant Registered Aboriginal Parties. (Source: Macedon Ranges Shire Council, 2022)

Determining historical themes

Historical themes are a useful tool in understanding and assessing heritage significance. Connecting places to themes provides a broader context for their history.

A history of the municipality since the beginning of settlement is presented here, which is structured around historical themes. A thematic, rather than chronological, approach to the history has been adopted because it provides context and linkages between people, places and stories, both in the development of an overall history and for use in future heritage planning for the area, including interpretation. A thematic history also serves the following functions:

- to tie together pieces of historical information into a meaningful structure;
- to identify important patterns and developments across time periods;
- to provide a clear and meaningful context for changes in the physical and social fabric of a place or area over time; and
- to guide future heritage-related work for a particular place or area—for example, understanding the heritage significance of a place or precent; heritage interpretation; and place-making and place-naming.

Historical themes for Macedon Ranges Shire

The historical themes for Macedon Ranges Shire are informed by *Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes*. These have been shaped through research into the history of the municipality.

Table 1. Historical themes and sub-themes for Macedon Ranges Shire.

Historical themes	Sub-themes
01. Shaping the Macedon Ranges environment	
1.1 Tracing climate and topographical change	Climate Geology and geomorphology Waterways and springs Soils
1.2 Tracing the emergence of plants and animals in Macedon Ranges	Flora and fauna
1.4 Creation stories and defining Country	
1.5 Living with natural processes	Fire Floods
1.6 Appreciating and protecting Macedon Ranges' natural wonders	

02. Peopling the places and landscapes of Macedon Ranges Shire	
2.1 **Living as Macedon Ranges' original** inhabitants	
2.2 Fighting for identity	
2.3 Exploring, surveying and mapping	Exploring Surveying for settlement
2.4 Adapting to diverse environments	
2.5 Migrating and making a home	The Chinese The Irish The Scots
2.6 Promoting settlement	Pastoral settlement Land sales Land selection Closer settlement Soldier settlement
03. Connecting Macedon Ranges Shire by transport and communications	
3.1 Establishing pathways	Tracks and roads Transport services Bridges and crossings Inns and hotels
3.3 Linking Macedon Ranges Shire by rail	Main railway lines Branch lines
3.4 Linking Macedon Ranges Shire by road in the twentieth century	Improving country roads Motor garages and service stations
3.6 Linking Macedon Ranges by air	
3.7 Establishing and maintaining communications	Post and telegraph services Telephone services Printing and distributing newspapers
04. Transforming and managing the land and natural resources	
4.1 Grazing and raising livestock	Nineteenth-century pastoral development Twentieth-century developments Cattle Horse-breeding Saleyards Pastoral complexes

04. **Transforming and managing the land and natural resources (cont)**	
4.2 Farming	Dairying
	Horticulture and floriculture
	Viticulture
	Farmers' commons
	Fencing
4.3 Gold mining	Taradale Mining Division
4.4 Exploiting forest, water and other natural resources	Wood-cutting and sawmilling
	Charcoal and eucalyptus oil
	Forest management
	Water supply
	Quarries
	Brickmaking
4.5 Transforming the land and waterways	
05. **Building Macedon Ranges' industries and workforce**	
5.1 Processing raw materials	Dairy factories
	Flour mills
	Breweries and chicory mills
	Flax mills
5.2 Developing a manufacturing capacity	Manufacturing in the nineteenth century
	Manufacturing in the twentieth century
5.3 Marketing and retailing	Early trade
	Retail development
5.4 Banking and finance	Commercial banks
	State Bank
5.5 Entertaining and socialising	
5.6 Catering for tourists	Hanging Rock
	Kyneton and Woodend
	Mount Macedon
5.7 Working	Patterns of work
	Unions and strikes
	Unemployment
06. Building towns, cities and the **Macedon Ranges**	
6.1 Living in country towns	Settlements on major transport routes
	Agricultural settlements

	Establishing towns and villages
	Goldmining settlements
	Railway townships
	Sawmilling settlements
	Tourist townships
6.2 Making homes in the Macedon Ranges	Homesteads and farmhouses
	Accommodation for rural workers
	Houses in country towns
	Retreats and summer residences
	Mount Macedon hill stations
	Private gardens
07. Governing in the Macedon Ranges Shire	
7.1 Developing self-government and democracy	Road districts
	Local municipalities
7.2 Maintaining law and order	Policing
	Courts
	Malmsbury Youth Training Centre
7.3 Defending Victoria and Australia	Defending Victoria
	Defending Australia
7.4 **Protecting Macedon Ranges' heritage**	
08. Building community life	
8.1 Maintaining spiritual life	Church of England
	Presbyterian Church
	Catholic Church
	Wesleyan and Methodist churches
	Other faiths
8.2 Educating people	Formal education
	Mechanics institutes
8.3 Providing health and welfare services	Medical care
	Aged care
	Caroline Chisholm shelters
	Sanitoriums and rest homes
	Infant welfare centres
	Reformatory institutions
	Animal welfare

O**8. Building community life (cont)**	
8.4 Forming community organisations	Agricultural societies
	Boy Scouts and Girls Guides
	Fire brigades
	Fraternities
	Red Cross
	Returned Services League
	Country Women's Association
	Other women's clubs
	Public halls
8.5 Preserving traditions and commemorating	Honouring those killed in war
	Remembering others
	Celebrating local history
8.6 Marking the phases of life	Early burial sites
	Cemeteries
09. Shaping cultural and creative life	
9.1 Participating in sport and recreation	Open space
	Recreational activities
	Sport
9.2 Nurturing a vibrant arts scene	Music
	Theatre
9.3 Achieving distinction in the arts	Artists
	Writers

Community consultation

In December 2021, Macedon Ranges Shire Council circulated an email to targeted stakeholders to brief them on the project, and to request any secondary source material on behalf of GML that may be of assistance to the study.

In March 2022, GML provided Council with the draft historical themes for initial review and comment. The draft themes were then circulated by Council to targeted stakeholders for comment. Council also carried out individual meetings with stakeholders and facilitated a round-table discussion with the Macedon Ranges Heritage Council to discuss the draft historical themes. The Macedon Ranges Heritage Council is an independent network of local heritage and history groups that Macedon Ranges Council consult on heritage matters.

Councillors requested wider community consultation on the project and this was undertaken from 24 August to 23 September 2022.

Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
CAG	Commonwealth of Australia Gazette
CWA	Country **Women's** Association
DELWP	Department of the Environment, Land, Water and Planning
EVCs	Ecological Vegetation Classes
FCV	Forest Commission of Victoria
LCC	Land Conservation Council
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly
MLC	Member of the Legislative Council
MRSC	Macedon Ranges Shire Council
nd	no date
NHL	National Heritage List
NLA	National Library of Australia
NT	National Trust of Australia
OBE	Order of the British Empire
PROV	Public Record Office Victoria
PWD	Public Works Department
RC	Royal Commission
RMIT	Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
RSL	Returned Services League
SLV	State Library Victoria
SRWSC	State Rivers and Water Supply Commission
TEH	Thematic Environmental History
VAS	Victorian Archaeological Survey
VGG	Victorian Government Gazette
VHD	Victorian Heritage Database
VHI	Victorian Heritage Inventory

VHR   Victorian Heritage Register

VMCP   Von Mueller Correspondence Project

VPRS   Victorian Public Record Series

Note

Five Mile Creek   Woodend and Romsey were both named Five Mile Creek. Where this term is used it is followed by the relevant location in brackets.

Limitations

The project brief provided by Macedon Ranges Council required historical research for this report to be limited to secondary source material. This includes:

- existing heritage and conservation studies for Macedon Ranges Shire;
- local histories;
- Victorian Heritage Database; and
- selected PhD and Masters theses.

Only a limited review of primary source material has been undertaken. This included sourcing readily available historical maps and plans, and historical images from State Library Victoria, Public Records Office Victoria and through the National Library of Australia's 'Trove' platform. There was a limited review of digitised newspapers, available through Trove, which were consulted for high priority themes that were not addressed in secondary source material. Further review of primary source material would yield additional information that would inform the historical themes explored in the report.

The project brief required the report to be approximately 30,000 words in length. Following the incorporation of feedback from Council on the draft report, however, the report is considerably longer. Notwithstanding the additional material added following the community consultation process managed by Council, it was not possible to include all the detailed feedback provided within the scope of this project, as the report is not intended to be a comprehensive history of the Macedon Ranges Shire.

Consultation with the Traditional Owner organisations was outside the scope of this project. As a result, information about Aboriginal history and heritage associated with the municipality has been limited to readily available documentary sources.

Following the community consultation review, Council provided the consolidated feedback to GML to incorporate into the draft report. GML has endeavoured to incorporate all input, however project constraints, such as the limitation of resources to secondary source material, has not allowed for all input to be incorporated.