



# Maldon Historic Area



## Visitor Guide

Located in and around Maldon township, Maldon Historic Area protects many relics of the gold mining era - abandoned shafts and tunnels, mullock heaps, quartz roasting kilns, stone walls, chimneys and machinery - as well as the Box and Ironbark forests once threatened by the constant demand for timber to feed steam boilers and shore up mine tunnels.



Quartz kilns at North British Mine

## Womin-dji-ka (Welcome)

The Maldon Historic Area is part of the traditional lands of the Dja Dja Wurrung People.

The Dja Dja Wurrung people's rights were recognised through a Recognition and Settlement Agreement with the State of Victoria in March 2013. The Dja Dja Wurrung People maintain a close and continuing connection to Djandak, their traditional Country.

Djandak is a cultural landscape that includes both tangible objects such as scarred trees, mounds, wells and stone artefact scatters; and intangible stories. Djandak is a living entity, which holds stories of creation and histories that cannot be erased.

Parks Victoria pays our respects to Dja Dja Wurrung Elders, past, present, and future, and asks visitors to do the same. Aboriginal artefacts are protected by law, and it is prohibited to disturb them in any way.

## How to get there

Maldon Historic Area is 136km north west of Melbourne. To get there, turn off the Calder Highway toward Castlemaine and Maldon at Elphinstone (Melway Ref: 509 B6).

## Enjoying the park

Along with the many mining relics, the beauty of the forest attracts walkers. Wildflowers abound during spring, especially in the heathy forest at Smiths Reef.

For more information call **Parks Victoria** on **13 1963** or visit [www.parks.vic.gov.au](http://www.parks.vic.gov.au)

If a long walk does not appeal to you, a ride on the Goldfields Railway will take you through Smiths Reef Forest past the Muckleford Bushland Reserve to Castlemaine. There is an interesting short walk from the Railway Station through the historic area to the centre of town. It includes the relics of the rich Beehive Mine, including the Beehive Chimney.

Enjoy spectacular views from the heritage listed fire tower on Mt Tarrengower. Anzac Hill gives a good view of the historic township.

**Caution** - Keep to the tracks for your safety and to avoid damage to old mine workings including shafts and tunnels.

Dam waters or mine waters may be contaminated and should not be drunk or used for active recreation. Fish caught in these dams should not be eaten. Always use water from a tap or safe supply.

## A town with a past

Alluvial gold was discovered in the Maldon district by Captain John Mechosk, a German prospector, in 1853, resulting in a rush of some 20,000 diggers to the alluvial gullies around Maldon. By the following year, only 2000 remained.

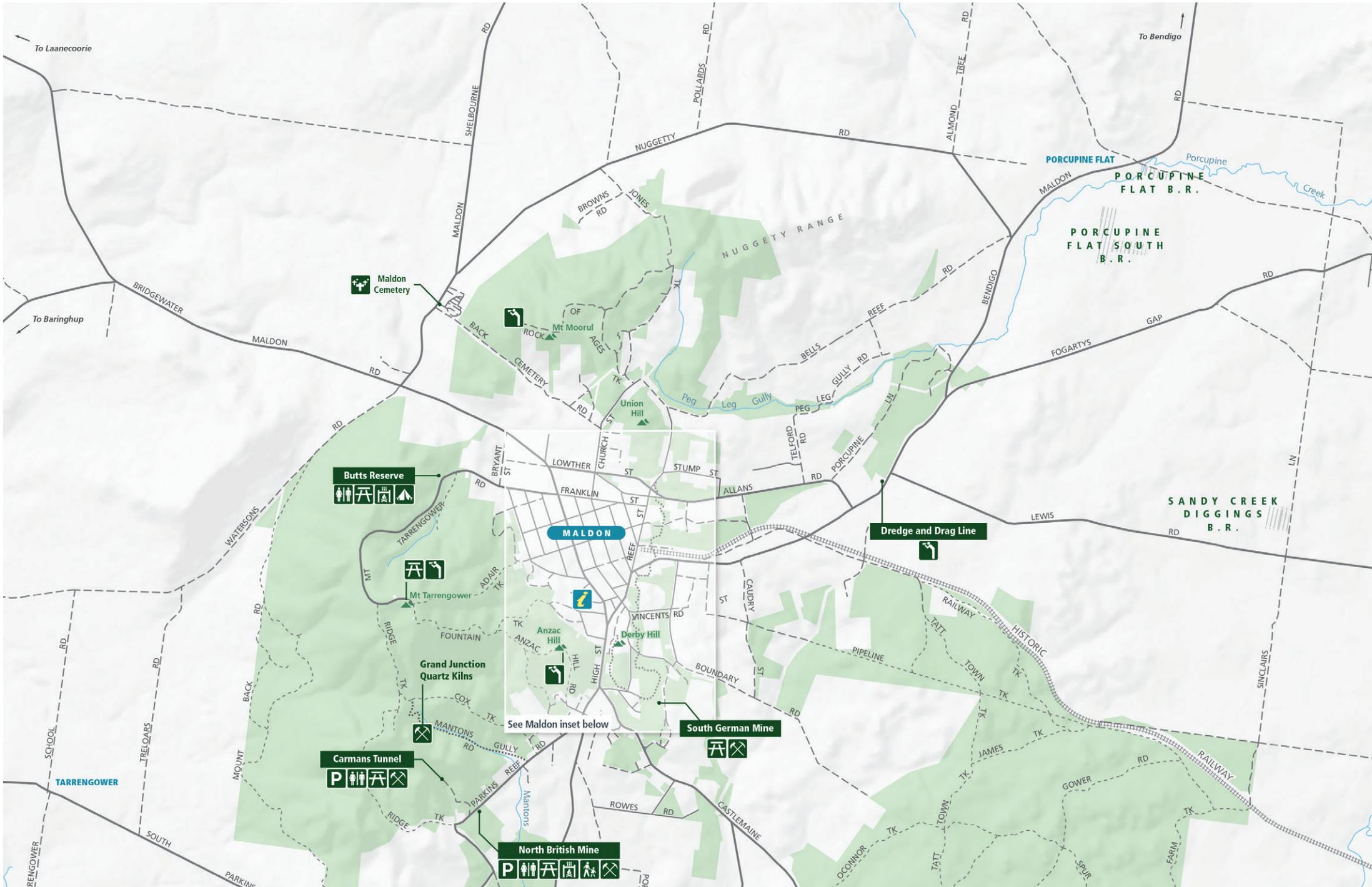
After the initial rush, companies were set up to mine the rich, but sometimes elusive, quartz reefs. Some alluvial mining was carried out using puddling machines powered by horse or steam. In the 1860s the amount of quartz reef gold produced at Maldon almost rivalled Bendigo (Victoria's richest quartz mining field).

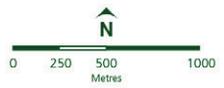
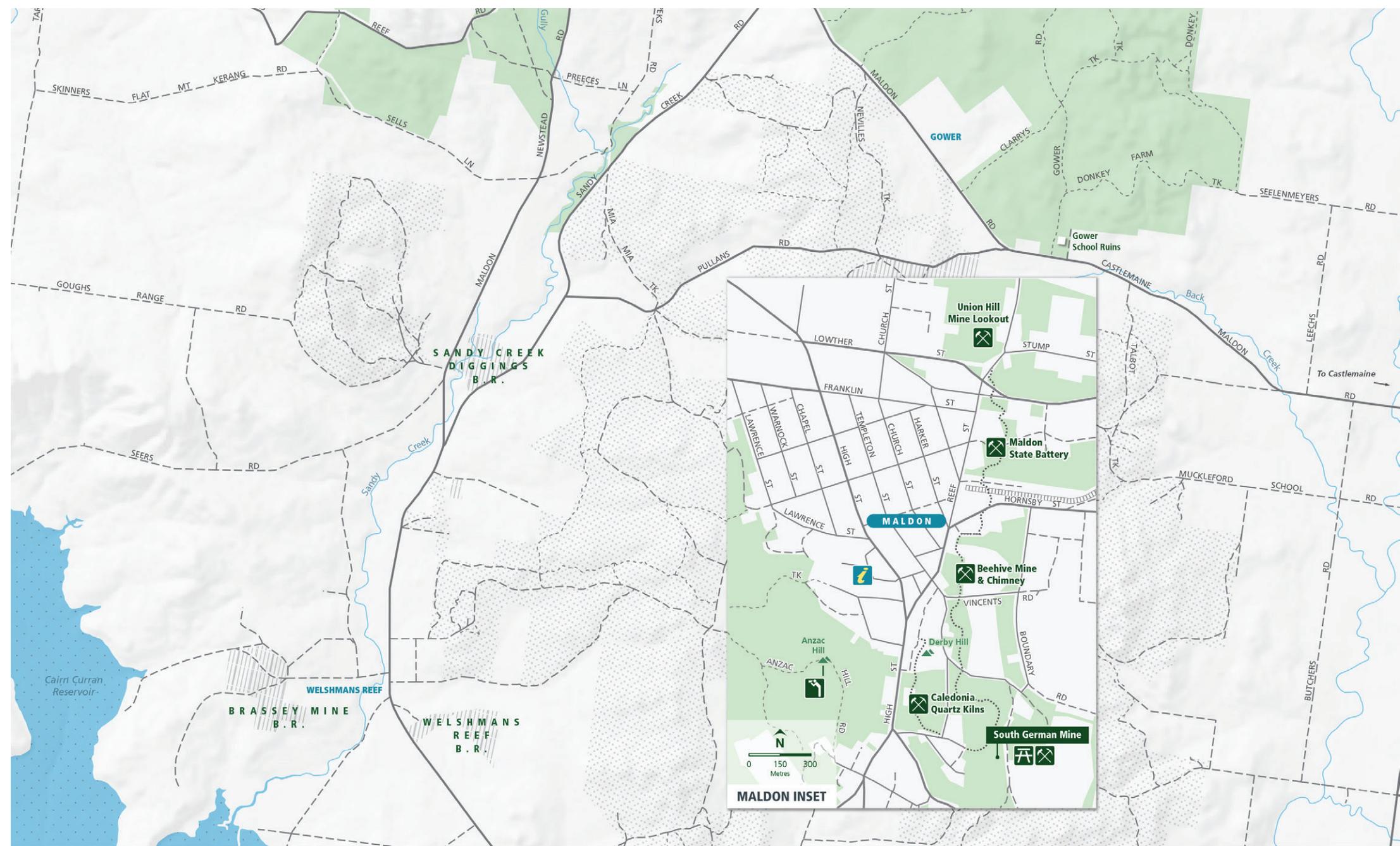
This prosperity was short lived (from 1870-1900), and the last deep mines closed in 1926. As gold production declined, the town's population dwindled. For most of the last century, Maldon experienced very little growth.

The miners left behind one of the best collections of accessible quartz reef mining relics in Victoria. Many of the mine sites, historic buildings and heritage features have been preserved.

In the 1990s Triad Minerals NL and Alliance Gold NL extracted 60,000 ounces of gold from the open cut at Union Hill. Current mining and exploration licences cover the Historic Area.

# Maldon Historic Area





- |                     |             |               |              |               |                      |
|---------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Parking             | Family walk | Mine relic    | Highway      | 4WD track     | Maldon Historic Area |
| Visitor information | BBQ (wood)  | Main road     | Sealed road  | Walking track | Other PV land        |
| Toilets             | Camping     | Unsealed road | State forest | Waterbody     |                      |
| Picnic table        | Lookout     |               |              |               |                      |

[www.parks.vic.gov.au](http://www.parks.vic.gov.au)

Disclaimer: Parks Victoria does not guarantee that this data is without flaw of any kind and therefore disclaims all liability which may arise from you relying on this information.

Data source acknowledgements: State Digital Mapbase, The State of Victoria and Department of Sustainability and Environment.

Cartography by Parks Victoria March 2013  
For mobile App search for Avenza PDF Maps

## For further information

Call Parks Victoria on **13 1963**  
or visit [www.parks.vic.gov.au](http://www.parks.vic.gov.au)

Maldon Visitor Information Centre  
High St, Maldon VIC 3463  
Tel: (03) 5475 2569

Castlemaine Visitor Information  
Centre, Mostyn St  
Castlemaine VIC 3450  
Phone: (03) 5471 1795  
Free Accommodation  
Bookings Service 1800 171 888

## Caring for the environment

Help us look after your park  
by following these guidelines:

Please take rubbish with you for  
recycling or disposal

Light fires only in fire places  
provided. Collect only dead wood  
from the ground for campfires.  
No fires are permitted on a day of  
**Total Fire Ban**. Portable gas or  
electric barbecues may be used  
provided:

- a 3 metre area is cleared of  
anything flammable
- at least 10 litres of water water  
is available for immediate use
  - an adult is in attendance  
at all times

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

Dogs must be kept on a lead

Firearms are prohibited in the  
Township of Maldon and within  
200 metres of walking tracks and  
recreational facilities

Prospectors must hold a  
current Miner's Right and  
backfill any holes dug

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

## Healthy Parks Healthy People

*Visiting a park can improve  
your health, mind, body and  
soul. So, with over four million  
hectares of parkland available  
to Victorians, why not escape  
to a park today?*



## Notable Maldon mines

The **Beehive Chimney**, a town landmark built in 1862, is 30 metres high and is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register. It is surrounded by an 1850s open-cut mine, winding, pumping and battery engine footings from 1860-1870s and the remains of a chlorination and cyanidation plant from the mine's last active period.

**South German Mine** is known for its early use of cyanide and chlorination works to extract gold.

**Carman's Tunnel** was built in 1882 for the Great International Quartz Mining Co NL. The tunnel is unusually wide and high. Regular guided tours are available.

**North British Mine** was the largest, most profitable and longest operating mine in Maldon, ceasing operation in 1926. The surviving structures represent the most comprehensive set of mining foundations in Victoria.

Recent mining activity can be seen from viewing platforms at **Union Hill** and the **Porcupine Flat** treatment plant. At **Union Hill** modern mining technology has been used to construct the open cut and rehabilitate the hillside with native trees grown from locally collected seed.

## Facilities and accommodation

Picnic areas are located at Butt's Reserve, North British Mine, South German Mine, Carman's Tunnel and Mt Tarrengower. Camping is permitted at Butt's Reserve, but there are few facilities. Bed and breakfast, self contained cottages, hotel and motel accommodation is available in Maldon. Caravan parks are located at Maldon, Welshmans Reef and Baringhup.



Remains of a puddler

September 2022

Printed on 100% recycled paper.

Healthy Parks  
Healthy People®

## The Box-Ironbark forest

Once important to the miners for timber and firewood (Fentemans Mine needed 50 tons of dry firewood each week), the bush is now a valued part of Victoria's Box-Ironbark forests.

Eighty-three percent of Victoria's original Box-Ironbark forest has been cleared. These remnants support a diverse range of native plants and animals, including many threatened native species.

## Mount Alexander Diggings Trail

Stroll around Maldon today and evidence of the gold rush is everywhere - in the buildings and in the surrounding bushland.

The Mount Alexander Diggings Trail is a guide to the remarkable relics of the gold rush. It provides a range of linked, interactive attractions involving gold mining sites and relics, historical accounts and images, modern gold mining operations, the extensive box-ironbark forest and several significant heritage towns.

The best way to find your way around the Diggings is to begin with a stop at the Visitor Information Centre in Maldon or Castlemaine and browse through the Diggings Guidebook.

## Heritage

Parks Victoria, Heritage Victoria, the Mount Alexander Shire Council and local groups work together to maintain the setting and character of Maldon and its surrounding Box-Ironbark forest. The collection of cottages, mine owner's villas, remnant goldfield gardens, stone gutters, roads and mining relics are part of Australia's history.

## Emergencies

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

Maldon Historic Area is in the North Central fire district. Bushfire safety is a personal responsibility. Anyone entering parks and forests during the bushfire season needs to stay aware of forecast weather conditions. Check the Fire Danger Rating and for days of Total Fire Ban at [www.emergency.vic.gov.au](http://www.emergency.vic.gov.au), on the VicEmergency smartphone app or call the VicEmergency Hotline on 1800 226 226. No fires may be lit on Total Fire Ban days.

On Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating days this Park will be closed for public safety. Do not enter the Park. If you are already in the Park, leave the night before or as early as possible in the morning. Warning signs may be erected but do not expect a personal warning. Check the latest conditions at [www.parks.vic.gov.au](http://www.parks.vic.gov.au) or by calling 13 1963.

