

BAROSSA GOLDFIELDS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In 1989 a letter was written to the Ranger in Charge of Para Wirra, requesting that the Goldfields Society restore the ruined stone cottage, which had been marked for demolition, and to re-establish the small garden and orchard as an historical site, which would compliment the Goldfields Walking Trail.

In June 1991 a small group of volunteers started clearing the site. They met every Tuesday for working bees and the cottage was finally rebuilt in July 1993. The volunteers' work is ongoing, maintaining the cottage, orchard and garden and the small museum which has been established.

In 2003 the Society won a commendation from the Inaugural Edmund Wright Heritage Awards.

JOIN US

The Society meet every Tuesday between 9.00am and 12.00noon and have bi-monthly Sunday meetings.

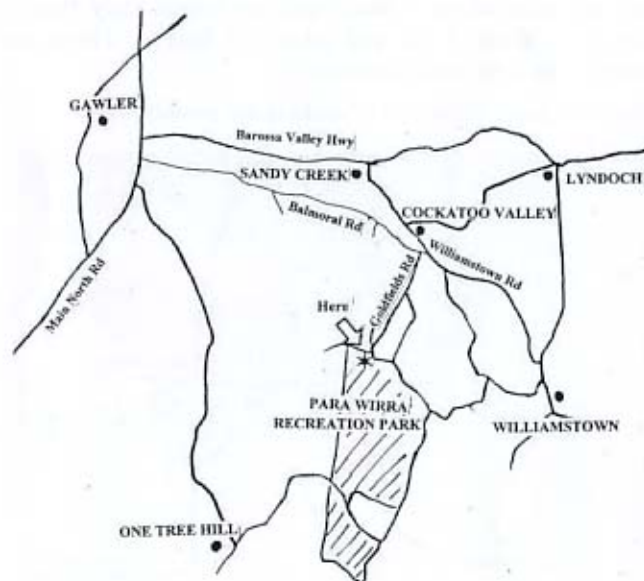
New members most welcome.

Contact: Bob Swarbrick (President)
Ph 0407 712 621



Bowden's Cottage as it stands today

LOCATION GUIDE



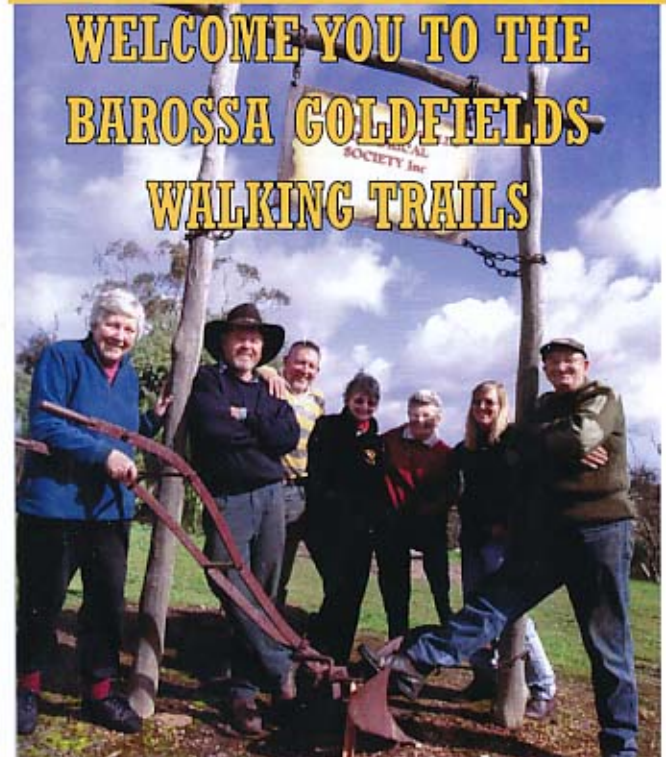
*Produced by Barossa Goldfields Historical Society,
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Information Sourced from Mines & Energy Department and
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BAROSSA GOLDFIELDS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

WELCOME YOU TO THE BAROSSA GOLDFIELDS WALKING TRAILS



SELF GUIDED WALKING TRAILS

GOLD MINING HISTORY

BILLY TEA & DAMPER

GUIDED TOURS

MUSEUM DISPLAYS

ANNUAL OPEN DAY

CONTACT BOB PH 0407712621

HISTORY

Alluvial gold was discovered by Job Harris in 1868 in Spike Gully. Within a week 2,000 people had rushed to the area. A block of Crown Land was proclaimed an official goldfield and a Warden of Goldfields and police trooper arrived to issue gold licenses and settle disputes. The township of the Barossa sprang up, which consisted of a narrow lane of stores and hotels. An Institute and School were added later and the township survived until the 1950s. The rush attracted over 4000 people. But by 1870 there were few miners and it was not until new discoveries brought diggers back to the field at Sims Rush in 1887 and Yatta Hill Rush in 1889. Several companies were formed to explore the field, but operations were unsuccessful. In 1896 an American mining authority Mr. L. Menzies acquired some leases and formed the Menzies Barossa Gold Mining Company. Menzies planned to make the mine the largest in Australia and in 1898 100 men were employed. The first crushing of ore in early 1898 was, however, an economic disaster and operations were suspended immediately. During the depression years of the 1930s alluvial deposits on the fields were reworked to eke out a living.

GOLD

Three types of gold deposits existed on the field. The oldest deposits occur in quartz veins, or reefs, as can be seen at the Belle of Barossa Mine. Ancient, buried alluvial deposits or leads, occur at depths of up to 30 metres below present hill tops. These deposits were formed about 15 million years ago when sand, gravel and clay, along with small particles of gold from outcropping reefs were washed into a large inland lake, which stretched northwards to Kapunda.

About 2 million years ago the area was uplifted by faulting, and the once continuous Tertiary sequence was dissected by erosion, a process which has continued to the present day. During this time gold was washed from the leads into the present drainage channels, forming modern alluvial deposits.

THE TRAIL

There are three loop trails. The Victoria loop is 1.4 km long and takes about 1 hour to complete. The Phoenix loop is 4.2 km and takes about 2 hours and the longer Lady Pearce Circuit is about 5 km and takes 3-4 hours. There are interpretive signs along the trails.

Fossicking and collection of rocks is not permitted.



Gold: Victoria Hill Circuit, 1.4 km; allow 1 hour

Brown+Gold: Phoenix Circuit, 4.2 km; allow 2 hours

Blue+Brown+Gold: Lady Pearce Circuit

G1 – Bowden's cottage

G2 – Return to cottage or continue on for Phoenix Circuit

G3 - Southern end of tram tunnel

G4 – Battery site and junction with Lady Pearce Circuit

G5 – Junction of Lady Pearce and Victoria Hill Circuits



BOWDEN'S COTTAGE

Bowden's Cottage in ruins in 1989

The Cottage was built by Jack and Vera Bowden, using local stone, timber and sand in the 1930's. The cottage comprised one main room with a fireplace for cooking, and a bedroom. Water was caught from the roof and stored in an underground water tank. Jack & Vera had 1 son and 3 daughters. When the youngest daughter Iris married Norm Bain in 1938 another room was added to the cottage, which is now the small museum. They continued to live in the cottage with her mother until 1957.

OPENING HOURS

Cottage is open every Tuesday from 9am – 12noon and the 3rd Sunday of every month from 1pm-4pm (*dependent on volunteer availability*).

Guided Tours for Groups and Schools are available by prior arrangement with Damper and Billy Tea in cooler months.

Annual Open Day held on the 4th Sunday in September.

