

# Self-Guided Historical Tour

# KORUMBURRA

A rich vein of history  
in South Gippsland



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**KORUMBURRA TOWNSHIP** was surveyed in 1887, and the first land sales in Commercial Street took place early in the following year. By the end of 1888, Antonio Radovick had completed his Korumburra Hotel which became the venue for many of the town activities. The opening was cause for a grand celebration, as was the arrival of the railway line in 1891, with its official opening taking place in June 1891.

With the discovery of coal and the arrival of the railway, the town was set to boom. From just a handful of businesses prior to the arrival of the railway, the town now had a connection to the world outside the vast impenetrable forest.

Shepherd's store was one of the first, set up in a tin shed on the railway line side of the main street; then soon there was an auction room, a butcher and a blacksmith. Settlers were taking up land on the edge of the town, and further afield and they too were able to benefit from the arrival of the railway line.

Some buildings of the time still stand. This brochure will give you a brief overview of some of those, and hopefully will give you a snap-shot of earlier times in our town, set in this beautiful area of South Gippsland. You will find much to interest you at Coal Creek Community Park and Museum so please visit, and Korumburra Historical Society has a wonderful collection of photos and documents which record the history of the town, should you wish to discover more of our history. The photos in this brochure are from the collection of Korumburra Historical Society.

Starting the walk from any point you could visit each site in a loop that would bring you back to your starting point.



## COAL CREEK COMMUNITY PARK & MUSEUM

The Park is a short drive along the South Gippsland Highway situated on the eastern edge of town. It has created a vivid image of how the area used to be in the days when coal mining was the main industry. There are many historical buildings as well as a significant collection of items and memorabilia of bygone days.

Several of the town's older buildings, have been reconstructed or relocated to Coal Creek to preserve them from demolition.

This Self Guided Historical Tour Guide was designed and compiled by members of the **KORUMBURRA HISTORICAL SOCIETY** with grateful support of the **VERA MOORE FOUNDATION** and the **ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA**.

The Korumburra Historical Society welcomes all visitors who wish to see our extensive collection or to obtain help in looking for information.

Visiting hours: 1.30 – 4.00pm Tuesdays or by appointment  
Contact: 03 5655 1932 (Doug Boston, Archivist)  
03 5655 1009 (Robert Newton, President)  
0409 248 603 (Janet Wilson, Secretary)

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- 1 KORUMBURRA RAILWAY STATION** (*Station Street*) and **SUBWAY**  
This grand building was completed in 1908. The first section of subway was completed in 1895 and later extended hence the differing entrances.
- 2 KORUMBURRA HOTEL** (*Cnr. Commercial & Radovick Streets*).  
Owned and built by Antonio Radovick in 1888 before the rail line reached the town.
- 3 NATIONAL BANK** (*85 Commercial Street*).  
This property was owned by Antonio Radovick who built two shops in 1890. The second shop was a land agent's business and in 1892 became the Post Office with Mrs Shepherd as Post-mistress.
- 4 BURNETS' HARDWARE STORE** (*89 Commercial Street – Burra Hardware*).  
There has been a hardware store on this site since 1893; operated by the Burnet family until 1963.



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- 5 FOREMAN BUILDINGS** (*97, 99 & 101 Commercial Street*).  
These three shops were built on this site in 1892. The first businesses operating here, were a newspaper office, a jeweller and musician, "The Colliery Store" and a mixed business and barber's shop. The photo shows the Foreman building in the foreground.
- 6 SITE OF THE MECHANICS' HALL** (*Radovick Street, now a used car yard*).  
The original Mechanics' Hall was built on top of the hill in Station Street, and moved to this site in 1895. A brick front was added to the building in 1932, and sadly the building was destroyed by fire in 1975.
- 7 FALCONER BUILDING** (*13 Radovick Street*).  
Neil Falconer established his timber yard on this site in 1893. Photo shows the original building. The present building was built in 1893.
- 8 BOSTON'S CARRIAGE FACTORY** (*7 Radovick Street*).  
Robert Boston established a business as a blacksmith and carriage builder on this site in 1893. Three generations of the family managed this business over a period of 102 years.



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**9 THE SAVINGS BANK** (5 Radovick Street).

Built in 1902; an impressive brick building.

**10 LYNTON HOUSE** (Cnr. Commercial Street & Radovick Street).

The Original building was occupied by C.E. Brown a chemist. Lynton House was built on the site in 1929 following a disastrous fire.

**11 SITE OF OLIVER GILPIN'S STORE** (31 Commercial St., Video Shop).

Oliver Gilpin established his first store in Mine Road Korumburra in 1895. He soon moved to Commercial Street and in 1921 built a new store at No. 31. Gilpin could lay claim to the first chain stores in Victoria, establishing 94 stores throughout Victoria and Tasmania, selling to Foy & Gibson 1944, which in 1951 became G. J. Coles.



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**12 SUTCLIFFE BUILDING** (19-25 Commercial Street).

John Sutcliffe was the owner builder of this building which accommodated three shops. The shop on the west end was occupied by F. Weichardt as a Bakery in 1892. W. Henderson was the occupier of the middle shop, while Williams the tailor had his business in the third shop. Now occupied by an accountant, a sport store and a restaurant.

**13 TOP OF THE TOWN** (Bridge Street).

Built by W. Nutall in 1892 as the Temperance Hotel, many businesses have operated from this site.

**14 FORMER POST OFFICE** (Cnr. Sth. Gipps. Hwy. & Bridge Street).

Built in Edwardian style by Neil Falconer in 1904. Extensions were carried out in 1948; it operated as the town's Post Office until 1974.

**15 STATE SCHOOL NO. 3077** (Mine Road).

There has been a school on this site since 1895. The original wooden building came from Clunes and was later used as the higher elementary school. The brick building facing Mine Road was built by Neil Falconer in 1912; it was used as a temporary emergency hospital during the 1919 Influenza Epidemic.

**16 AUSTRAL HOTEL** (Cnr. Sth. Gipps. Hwy. & Bridge Street).

John Sutcliffe constructed this building in 1894. The photo shows the Hotel, the Bank of Australasia and the former Post Office.



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View of Korumburra



18 & 20



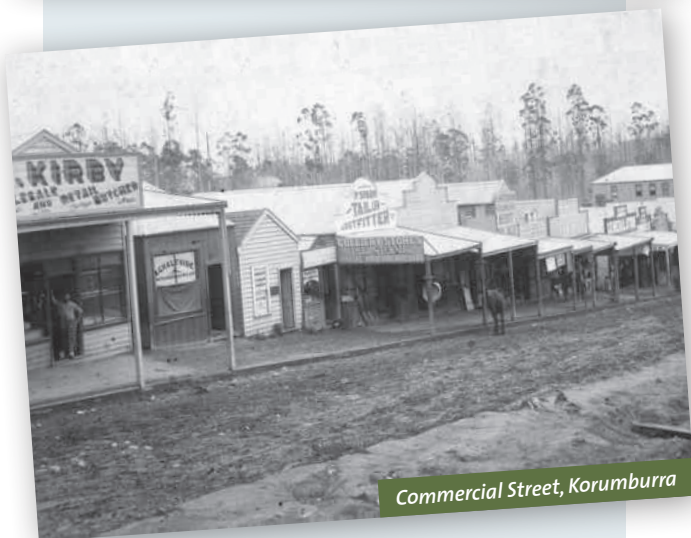
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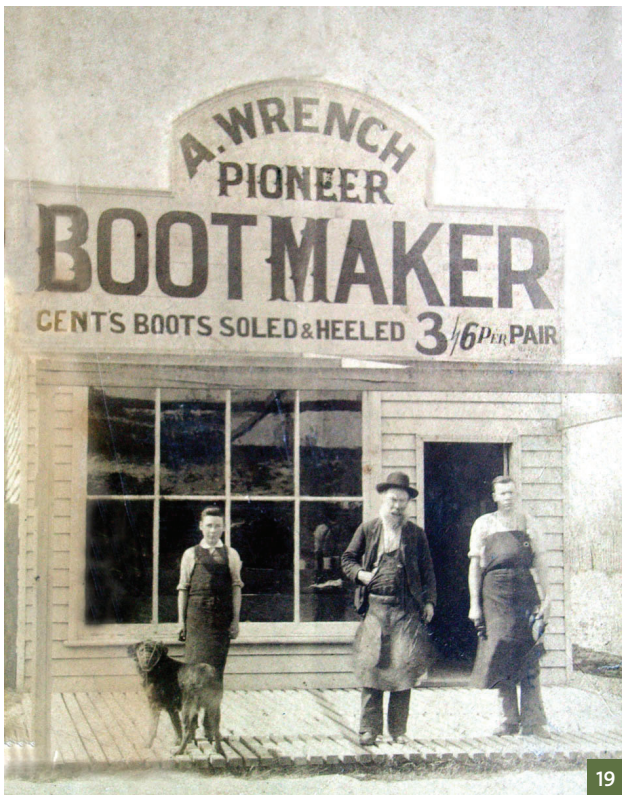
16, 17 & 18



Commercial Street, Korumburra



Korumburra pioneers



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**17 SITE OF THE TIN SHED SCHOOL** (36 Bridge Street).

The first Korumburra school was conducted here in 1890. James Shepherd's corrugated iron shed was moved from lower Commercial Street and renovated so that it could accommodate school classes. In its former location it had operated as a store and Post Office.

**18 BANK OF AUSTRALASIA SITE** (Bridge Street).

The original school site, owned by Mrs. Shepherd, was purchased by the bank in 1899. The bank building was sold to Alex Scott & Co. in 1971 when the present building was constructed.

**19 MOBIL SERVICE STATION**

(Cnr. Commercial Street 85 Bridge Street).

Thomas Wrench, bootmaker, had a shop on this corner in 1892. The Wrench family operated their shoe and boot business in Korumburra at various sites over the next one hundred years.

**20 CENOTAPH** (relocated to Coleman Park in 1970).

Road development brought about the necessity to move this memorial from its original position. Photo shows Bank of Australasia in background.