

## The Golden City

Ballarat is known as the Golden City. Its current form, layout and development as Victoria's most important inland city, is largely the result of the goldrush. Prior to the goldrush the land was the quiet home of the Wadawurrung people for many thousands of years.

The gold rush began in 1851 and soon Ballarat's richest fields, the fabled Canadian Lead and the Jewellers Shop were found, to the west side of the then Canadian Forest now Woookarung Regional Park.

Ballarat's famous leads, the Eureka, Navy Jacks, Canadian and Warrenheip Lead all run under the western edge of the Park. The land now occupied by the Park was scoured for alluvial gold first, as evidenced in the large number of remnant shallow alluvial gold mine holes. Later deep exploration shafts were sunk looking for the ends of the elusive leads.

One reason the forest survived the gold rush is that for all the digging and exploration, very few gold finds were found within the forest itself. Most mining activity was along the western boundary.

The forest was decimated by the incessant demand for timber supports for the deeper underground mining and fuel for steam power. By 1865 a State Forest Protection Board was set up to manage the forest.

Beginning around 1870 water was harvested in the forest with water races channeling water into holding dams for use in sluicing gullies for gold. There are over 30 kilometers of water races in the Park, five holding dams and seven sluice fields.

The last mining activity was Joe Whites shaft at Sparrow Ground in the 1970's.

Fossilifiers are still active within the Park to this day.



## Friends of Canadian Corridor

The Friends of the Canadian Corridor Incorporated (FoCC) formed in 2012, when the blue gum plantations in the Canadian Forest were removed and the land cleared prior to being handed back to the Victorian Government to be sold off.

Local residents banded together to protect the Canadian Forest, the ex plantation land within the forested corridor which forms the scenic backdrop to Ballarat. The Friends proposed the creation of a "Multi Use Forest Park"

The FoCC's vision became a reality with the declaration of the Canadian Regional Park by Premier Daniel Andrews MP on August 5th 2016. On July 19th 2017 the Park was renamed "Woookarung Regional Park".

This Woookarung Heritage Mining Map Brochure was proudly produced by FoCC members and friends.



Aerial image of cleared plantation land 2014. Looking north from Green Hill

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BALLARAT  
HERITAGE  
FESTIVAL

## Woookarung Regional Park

FoCC Heritage Mining Walk 19<sup>th</sup> May 2024



Horse puddler – possibly at Mt Clear, Courtesy Max Harris Collection, Ballarat Mechanics Institute

## The walk

The heritage mining walk starts at the Wilson St Water tanks, Wilson St, Canadian.

The trail follows existing bush tracks south via Pax Hill, Chinnery Mine, Sawpit Gully, the Grasstree Nature Trail, Conglomerate Hill and the Lookout. The return journey is via bush tracks beside Boundary Rd. The total distance including return via Boundary Rd is 8.0km.

The trail is bush tracks, gullies and occasional steep hills. Solid footwear and clothing is essential.

There are no facilities along the way.

## Elevation (m)



