

SKULDUGGERY

UNSOLVED CRIMES OF THE HERITAGE HIGHWAY

Where to go and play Skulduggery

In the historic heartlands of the Australian island colony of Van Diemen's Land, (now Tasmania), in the 1830s the journey of approximately 200km between the north and south of the island was undertaken by horseback or horse-drawn carriage amid some danger.

The tiny towns along the highway populated by convicts and free settlers grew as settlement of the interior increased.

Each village along the Heritage Highway, as it is known today, still bears the legacy of these early years seen in the unique built environment - convict architecture and workmanship is evident everywhere in the colonial buildings and other features of the landscape - in public and private buildings - homes, churches, inns, military outposts, roads, bridges, culverts and signs along the way.

Oatlands 1836

Forgery for Fools

Visit the village of Oatlands and uncover the nefarious dealings of George Dudfield, publican, gaoler, trickster and blackguard. Can you go one better than John James? Can you get your man? Check out the convict-built Gaoler's Residence and the imposing Gaol walls, inside which he was incarcerated. Was he sentenced to rot in the Supreme Court - one of the oldest in the country?

The home of John James - it's worth taking a stroll around Oatlands and noting its handsome collection of colonial sandstone buildings, the largest village collection in Australia.

The 87 buildings in the main street retain the character of a 19th Century village with much of the stone being quarried locally from quarry sites around the town (some still exist) and from the shores of Lake Dulverton, home to birds and wildlife.

Don't miss Callington Mill, the third oldest windmill in Australia and one of only four to have survived from a bygone industrial era.

Ross 1835

The Arch Villains

Discover why the famous bridge at Ross took so long to build, grapple with the mysteries of Dr Zweigle's code breaker and discover the sinister truth behind the fight that broke out on Christmas Day 1834 in Mr Saddler's Tap room.

In Ross today, check out the centre four corners of the village where the states of temptation, salvation, recreation and damnation are represented by the pub, the church, the community hall and the gaol respectively. The bridge, the bakery, the Wool Centre and the charming cottages of the tree lined main street are focal points of Ross today.

Longford 1832

Where There's Smoke...

Travel with John James to Longford and the colonial properties of Brickendon and Woolmers Estates in search of the shadowy forces who laid waste to Joseph Archer's stacks in the summer of 1832.

While in Longford today look out for the beautiful old churches, grand country homes, charming cottages, antique shops and inns in the streets of the historic village - still the centre for the surrounding rural district. The hawthorn hedged roadsides are a pretty site, particularly when covered in springtime blossom.