Mary MacKillop Church
Corner Bentinck and Queen Streets, Portland
An old parsonage, located on the corner of Mary’s first St Joseph’s school yard and marked the beginning of the Josephite order.

Royal Oak Hotel
125 Church Street, Portland
Mary MacKillop and Father Julian Tenison Woods stayed here when they visited the Portland area.

Father Woods Tree
Corner Bowden Street and Queen Street, Penola
A marker to commemorate the site where Father Woods was known to have prepared sermons and celebrating Mass beneath the shelter of the towering River Red Gums.

Father Woods Park
Riddoch Highway, Glenroy (21km north of Penola)
Fascinating exhibitions on the lives of Mary MacKillop and Father Julian Tenison Woods, as well as a range of books, souvenirs and memorabilia.

St Joseph’s Church
Cnr Petticoat Lane and Portland Street, Penola
This purpose-built school building was completed in May 1867 after Mary MacKillop’s classes outgrew a small cottage, St Joseph’s School and marked the beginning of the Josephite order.

All Saints Catholic Church
119 Bentinck Street, Portland
Mary MacKillop boarded the steamship SS Penola from Port MacDonnell for Hamilton on 22 June 1867 for the journey to Adelaide, where she went on to establish the Cathedral Hall School.

Alexander MacKillop’s Grave
Coleraine Road, 2km east of Hamilton
The final resting place of Mary MacKillop’s father, Alexander MacKillop, located at the Old Cemetery.

Saint Mary’s Catholic Church
23 Dinwoodie Street, Hamilton
An old stable formerly located on this site housed Mary’s first school. This is where the Josephite Sisters established their first headquarters for Father Julian Tenison Woods when he visited the district during the 1860s.

Saint Mary’s Star of the Sea Catholic Church
Hagen Street, Robe
A school operated by two Sisters of St Joseph appointed by Mary MacKillop to establish the Cathedral Hall School.

Christ Church Anglican Church
31 Church Street, Penola
A stained glass window depicts the young Mary teaching her beloved students.

Christ Church Anglican Church
Cnr Bentinck Street and North Terrace, Port MacDonnell
A school operated by two Sisters of St Joseph appointed by Mary MacKillop in any Anglican Church throughout the world.

The map below contains a suggested route for your Mary MacKillop pilgrimage. The main attractions are located in the townships of Penola, Portland and Hamilton, however the region also features other destinations of significance if time permits.

Port MacDonnell
For further information to assist your stay in the region please visit:
- Hamilton Visitor Information Centre
- Robe Visitor Information Centre
- Portland Visitor Information Centre
- Casterton Visitor Information Centre
- Leake Street, Nelson, Victoria
- Shiels Tce, Casterton, Victoria
- www.glenelg.vic.gov.au
- www.robe.com.au
- www.robevisitorcentre.com.au
- www.pɔntounavitorinformaticentre.com.au
- Lonsdale Street, Hamilton, Victoria
- Hamilton and Grampians Visitor
- 08 8738 4051
- 1800 035 567
- www.maritime-discovery.com
- 1300 807 056
- www.portdenison.com.au
- 08 8721 0425
- www.genesiscreative.com.au
- 08 8737 2855
- www.visitmarymackillop.com.au
- www.charlesstreet.com.au
- www.portmacdonnell.vic.gov.au
- 1300 827 999
- 08 8738 4051
- 08 8701 6463
- 08 8743 3755
- 08 8738 4051
- 0411 744 100
- 0411 744 100
- 08 8701 6463
- 0411 744 100
- 0411 744 100
- 08 8743 3755
- 0411 744 100

This information brochure is a joint project of the Southern Grampians Shire Council and Grampians Shire Council in Victoria and South Australia’s Wattle Range Council, Grant District Council and Robe District Council.

Mary MacKillop is widely referred to as a ‘Saint for all Australians’, and her influence has been particularly strong in north-eastern Australia. It was here that Mary not only discovered her love of teaching, but found God’s calling. It is also where the story of the hospitaller began and where it grew in the heart of the people of Australia.
In 1860, at the age of 18, Mary MacKillop left her home in Melbourne to work in Penola as a governess for her Uncle Alexander Cameron and Aunt Margaret (nee MacKillop). The Camerons were among the first native Melbourne to work in Penola as a governess for Alexander and Margaret Cameron. Mary MacKillop returned briefly to Melbourne in 1863, but it was ‘the gentle learned priest’ Father Julian Tenison Woods who shift to a purpose-built school building now referred to as the Woods-MacKillop Schoolhouse, which is located on the corner of Petticoat Lane.

Mary was sacristan at the All Saints Catholic Church which was completed in the year of her arrival, and now features a stained glass window in her honour. Within weeks of the schoolhouse opening, Mary MacKillop boarded the steamship SS Penola for the journey to Adelaide, where she went on to establish the Catholic Hall School, officially took vows and became Mary of the Cross.

Building on a dream. New directions. The Sisters of St Joseph continued her work in Penola, and when Alexander MacKillop died suddenly in 1868 at Hamilton’s Victoria Hotel at the age of 56, with his wife Flora by his side. The funeral service was held in Hamilton’s Saint Mary’s Catholic Church, and Alexander MacKillop’s Grave is located on a prominent corner in the Roman Catholic section of the Old Cemetery on Coleraine Road. Stained glass windows and banners within Saint Mary’s Catholic Church pay homage to Alexander and Mary MacKillop during their time spent in the district during the 1860s. An annual ceremony is held to remember the first time that a representation of Mary MacKillop has been placed in any Anglican Church throughout the world.

The Journey - Beyond local borders. In April 1867, Father Woods offered his patron, Catholic Education in Adelaide. After delivering a draft set of rules for the new and revolutionary Institute of St Joseph, Mary MacKillop was welcomed with practical cordiality. On 22 June 1867, she boarded the steamer SS Penola at Port MacDonnell jetty for the journey to Adelaide, where she went on to establish the Catholic Hall School. The institute expanded at a rapid rate, and after taking her final vows in 1869, Mary embarked on a life of travel. Her journeys took her from small towns like Robe, which established a Josephites school in the Star of the Sea Church, to remote corners of Australia which inspired and influenced her life’s work, and returned to the region at every opportunity. As a consequence, the collective townships which feature in this brochure are enormously proud to not only have played a part in the journey of this extraordinary Australian, but to have provided a pathway for our own road to sanctity.

Mary MacKillop never forgot this south-eastern corner of Australia which inspired and influenced her life’s work, and returned to the region at every opportunity. As a consequence, the collective townships which feature in this brochure are enormously proud to not only have played a part in the journey of this extraordinary Australian, but to have provided a pathway for our own road to sanctity.

Father Woods’ parish covered 56,000 square kilometres of bushland, and he could regularly be found preparing sermons and celebrating Mass in the shadow of towering River Red Gums such as the Father Woods Tree. He inspired Mary’s commitment to the education of children, and housed various families in his cottage, St Joseph’s Church, and then a stable formerly known as the Woods-MacKillop Park. Mary MacKillop, converted the stable into a schoolhouse which could accommodate up to 40 students, and it was here that the Cradle of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart began. On 10 March 1866, the Feast of St Joseph, Mary wore a black dress and signed off as “Mary, Sister of St Joseph” for the first time. In 1867, this shift to a purpose-built school building now referred to as the Woods-MacKillop Schoolhouse, which is located on the corner of Petticoat Lane.

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