

Penguin Attractions

Dutch Windmill in Hiscutt Park

Situated in the centre of town just behind the main street railway station, the park, with its artificial lake, was built in 1984. The waterwheel was added in 1993.

The replica Dutch windmill, from plans of a mill at Nieuwegein, Utrecht, was presented to the people of Penguin to commemorate its Dutch settlers in the town as well as Tasmania's first explorer. It is a one-third scale 'Wipmolen', a style still common in the Netherlands and used mainly for draining low lying land. This type of windmill first appeared in 1632.

The plaque reads:

"On behalf of the Dutch settlers of Penguin on the first day of October 1988 as a gift in the Australian Bicentennial year. The mill is dedicated to the memory of Janneti Tjaers who was the wife of Abel Tasman".

A second plaque reads:

"This windmill is a Bicentennial Gift from the Dutch community to the people of Penguin in appreciation of the warm welcome extended to those migrants who settled here. 2 January 1988".

<https://monumentaaustralia.org.au/themes/landscape/settlement/display/70702-dutch-windmill>

<http://www.dutchtasmanianconnection.com/dutch-in-penguin.html>

Roadside gardens

Entering Penguin along the coastal tourist drive from Ulverstone you will find the Ling Perry Roadside Gardens. Built as a labour of love by two nearby residents back in the 1980s, the gardens still flourish, a feat recognised by Heritage Tasmania in its heritage listing. The gardens overlook Watcombe Beach and are now maintained by Central Coast Council and local residents.

Mosaics

A newcomer to our attractions is several mosaics. The one opposite the Uniting Church Hall, by local mosaicists, captures the very essence of our town.

By contrast, the nearing-completion 'Wall of Compassion' by Friends of Penguin General Cemetery, Compassionate Communities Inc. and Flourish honours our friends, neighbours, and relatives - fellow Tasmanians living with mental health challenges.

The Big Penguin (& relatives!)

Constructed by the Goliath Cement Co of Railton, our ferro-cement icon stands three metres high and commemorates the centenary of the proclamation of Penguin back on 25th October 1875. It was later coated with fibreglass to give it added strength.

Nowadays the Big Penguin is not alone as all the nearby rubbish bins are decorated with cement penguins. As well, the town is populated with a variety of fibreglass penguins, each about a metre and a half high.

Five kilometres west of town, at the Howth roundabout on Bass Highway you will find Pablo, our psychedelic penguin, painted by our local art students. He's had quite a history. Created back in the 1980s and initially placed at Johnstons Beach on the tourist drive from Burnie, he disappeared for several years reappearing where he now sits as a sentinel to Penguin.

<https://www.theadvocate.com.au/story/5684844/painting-the-town-pink-for-breast-cancer-awareness-month/>

<https://www.theadvocate.com.au/story/5800282/penguin-community-raises-thousands-at-pink-up-your-town/>

Uniting Church

Primitive Methodist services began in Penguin early in the 1860s. The church was opened in 1866. Following the 1901 amalgamation of the Primitive and the United Free Methodist congregations' construction of the present church commenced. It opened in 1903 at a cost 1100 pounds.

Penguin Market

Situated in the old Penguin school and built in 1925 it now houses the largest permanent undercover market in Tasmania. Open every Sunday, the market offers locally grown produce, giftware, clothing, furniture, collectibles and so much more. As well there is a variety of food choices and live entertainment.

Penguin Railway Station

Built in 1901 when the first train arrived in town, it closed in 1978 once passenger rail ceased. Local businessman Ron Gee bought the station relocating it to his property the return of which occurred in 2001 initiated by the Penguin History Group and funded by Central Coast Council.

Next to the station you will find the old Penguin Gaol, circa 1902-1962. Originally located behind Penguin's courthouse it was restored and re-sited by the Penguin Apex Club in 1992.

Penguin's Mines

Just out of town on the coastal road to Ulverstone lies this short-lived mine. Registered in 1870 and abandoned shortly after, reopened by a Melbourne syndicate in 1898, it too failed.

A like fate befall the nearby Neptune Mine. First worked in 1868 for a short time, reopened in 1884 and abandoned again in the early 1890s.

1897 saw open-cut mining start just behind Penguin. A year later a 3.5 mile part wooden part iron horse-drawn rail tramway was built from the Penguin wharf to the mine site snaking across 25 bridges. Reaching peak production in 1905, 6480 tons of ore was mined employing 17 people. However, by 1909 it too had closed.

Walking Tracks

Our hinterland offers an array of walking tracks including trails up the Dial Range to Mt Montgomery, and just ten minutes from town the Ferndale Bush Walk, a delightful track to an old mine-site and tunnel. The walk crosses many small bridges and is over-grown with age-old ferns. Enjoy a picnic in the beautiful unspoiled surroundings, especially in the evenings in the company of twinkling and shining glow-worms.

Then there's the 80km Penguin to Cradle Mountain trek. Though somewhat neglected, the walk offers intrepid adventurers an array of coastal views to mountain panoramas, from walking along a wild river to climbing mountain ranges. From rainforests to heathland, coastal and alpine, the trek offers a different Tasmania to that of the Overland Track. The walk takes about six days

Penguin's Heritage Trail

Our 26 listed properties, now there's a history, past and recent. Many of the sites where listed back in 2007, a ruse to circumvent what some residents considered inappropriate development in the CBD.

The Penguin General Cemetery is where much of our history sleeps. It's a good starting point from which to mosey along the sites. Did you know we have a very celebrated John Doe buried there from 1915?

<https://www.independent.ie/regionals/kerryman/news/who-is-the-irishman-buried-in-tasmania-after-1915-death-27420636.html>

Or that Australia's first cycle pedal flying machine was designed and built in Penguin? Who knows what you might discover. Read the original Heritage Tasmania's listing records elsewhere on this website.