Penola is the oldest town in the Limestone Coast and has many attractions to offer the tourist. It is widely recognised as an historic town. Many of its buildings are listed on the State Heritage Register and some are owned and maintained by the National Trust. Today Penola offers visitors a wide variety of accommodation, art galleries, craft shops, fine food and the famed Coonawarra wine area.

Penola's first settlers were nomadic Aboriginal people, the Pinejunga, who lived in the bush, and hunted by the occasional lagoon amidst the spindly stringy bark forests, and under the shade of massive red gums which dot the landscape. In the town name although no one is exactly sure, seems to derive from an Aboriginal word 'Penola meaning swamp, the name given to a location twelve kilometers north east along the Comaum Road. While another suggestion is 'pena oorla' meaning 'wooden house' and referring to the first pub, the Royal Oak.

Prominent figures in Penola's Past have moulded the town to what it is today. This includes Alexander Cameron, the pioneering pastoralist who arrived in 1845 and founded the town in 1850. Another Scotman, the outgoing John Riddoch acted as ‘Squire of Penola’ over the next 40 years. He planted the first vines and completed building the magnificent homestead of Yallum Park in 1880.

By 1863 Penola boasted the second largest library outside of Adelaide and this attracted numerous people to call Penola home, including poets, Adam Lindsay Gordon, John Shaw Neilson and Will Ogilvie, all of whom were inspired by the landscape. The towns name although no one is exactly sure, seems to derive from an Aboriginal word ‘Penola meaning swamp, the name given to a location twelve kilometers north east along the Comaum Road. While another suggestion is ‘pena oorla’ meaning ‘wooden house’ and referring to the first pub, the Royal Oak.

This informative, self-guided walk provides an opportunity to view architecture, historical sights and find out about the notable inhabitants of the past. The walk winds its way through the heritage precincts, streets and laneways of Penola and there is simply no better way to explore the rich historical and cultural tapestry of the town. It allows those who partake to gain insight into the community that is Penola and experience the importance of keeping local history alive. The walk is signposted and the brief descriptions at each point of call allow you to fully appreciate the hardships of the town and realise how Penola has developed and arrived at where it is today. Take a step-back in time and discover the intriguing past and secrets of Penola.

The ‘Walk with History’ is suitable for all ages and takes around an hour at a leisurely pace to complete. Cars can be parked at the John Riddoch Centre, formerly the Mechanics Institute, which now houses the Local History Collection and acclaimed Display. It is ideally designed as a walk. Many take advantage of the set path and cycle it or even in the colder weather do it as a drive and view the sights from the comfort of their vehicle.

Other Places to visit close by
- Yallum Park must not be missed. This 1880 two storey Victorian Mansion Bins on the Millicent Road is one of the best preserved house of its type in Australia.
- Mount Adels Slab Hut built in the 1850’s in Cameron St
- Admire the stained glass windows of the Catholic Church.
-Ide intrigued by the unique trees growing around the township.
- View Abbey’s Folly from Shepherd’s Lane off the Dergholm Road
- John Riddoch’s original winery and cellars, now known as Wynns Coonawarra Estate.
- Relax at the Julian Tenison Woods tree and park
- Do some research and speak to someone at the Local History Room in the John Riddoch Centre.
- Relax at the Julian Tenison Woods tree and park
- Do some research and speak to someone at the Local History Room in the John Riddoch Centre.
- Wynns Coonawarra Estate
- John Riddoch’s original winery and cellars, now known as Wynns Coonawarra Estate.
- Relax at the Julian Tenison Woods tree and park
- Do some research and speak to someone at the Local History Room in the John Riddoch Centre.
- Relax at the Julian Tenison Woods tree and park
- Do some research and speak to someone at the Local History Room in the John Riddoch Centre.
- Relax at the Julian Tenison Woods tree and park
- Do some research and speak to someone at the Local History Room in the John Riddoch Centre.
- Relax at the Julian Tenison Woods tree and park
- Do some research and speak to someone at the Local History Room in the John Riddoch Centre.
- Relax at the Julian Tenison Woods tree and park
- Do some research and speak to someone at the Local History Room in the John Riddoch Centre.
- Relax at the Julian Tenison Woods tree and park
- Do some research and speak to someone at the Local History Room in the John Riddoch Centre.
- Relax at the Julian Tenison Woods tree and park
- Do some research and speak to someone at the Local History Room in the John Riddoch Centre.
- Relax at the Julian Tenison Woods tree and park
- Do some research and speak to someone at the Local History Room in the John Riddoch Centre.
- Relax at the Julian Tenison Woods tree and park
- Do some research and speak to someone at the Local History Room in the John Riddoch Centre.
- Relax at the Julian Tenison Woods tree and park
- Do some research and speak to someone at the Local History Room in the John Riddoch Centre.
- Relax at the Julian Tenison Woods tree and park
- Do some research and speak to someone at the Local History Room in the John Riddoch Centre.
- Relax at the Julian Tenison Woods tree and park
- Do some research and speak to someone at the Local History Room in the John Riddoch Centre.
- Relax at the Julian Tenison Woods tree and park
- Do some research and speak to someone at the Local History Room in the John Riddoch Centre.
- Relax at the Julian Tenison Woods tree and park
- Do some research and speak to someone at the Local History Room in the John Riddoch Centre.
- Relax at the Julian Tenison Woods tree and park
- Do some research and speak to someone at the Local History Room in the John Riddoch Centre.
- Relax at the Julian Tenison Woods tree and park
- Do some research and speak to someone at the Local History Room in the John Riddoch Centre.
- Relax at the Julian Tenison Woods tree and park
- Do some research and speak to someone at the Local History Room in the John Riddoch Centre.
1. JOHN RIDDOCH CENTRE
Formerly the Hindoo Mechanics Institute and Public Library built by George Gladbroke in 1867. W.I. Gore was the architect.

2. BOND STORE
Built adjacent to Ulva Cottages to hold Hindoo's liquor supplies and goods received from interstate. During Colonial days (pre 1901) customs duty was payable on goods transported between adjacent colonies; the building has also been used as a residence.

3. FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
A weatherboard building erected on this site in 1843 and demolished.

4. LULA COTTAGE
Built in 1872 for Alexander Cameron, daughter Margaret and son-in-law Dr Docker. The building has been used as a residence, shop and in 1876 became a brick and iron building.

5. McPherson Street
McPherson was replaced by the present building in 1963. The original District Council Office built on land donated by William McPherson by generations of the family until the late 1970s.

6. PENDA PARK
For many years prior to the establishment of the Park in 1970 the area was the local livery stables.

7. MOTHER MARY MACKILLOP MEMORIAL PARK
This site of Mary MacKillop's first school in 1866, a converted stable.

8. SAINT MARY'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
Built in 1912 by Michael Harris and William Blight on land donated by Thomas Goudie and Richard Clarke. The building has been used as a residence and B&B accommodation.

9. D.J. LYNN & CO
Built as a two-storey weatherboard building on this site in the 1850s and in 1860 it sold to Andrew McKeand. Since his death in 1899 the next twelve years saw a succession of owners until purchased in 1911 by ex-Mounted Police Trooper Daniel James Lynn. It has traded under the name U.F.J.Lynn & Co since then although having several other owners.

10. PRINCE OF WALES HOTEL
Original building first licensed to John Bowden in 1860. Present building built adjacent to Ulva Cottage to hold Penola's liquor supplies and goods received from interstate. During Colonial days (pre 1901) customs duty was payable on goods transported between adjacent colonies; the building has also been used as a residence.

11. LOCAL IMAGES
First used as a home of Donald Sharam's saddlery shop.

12. TOFFEE & TREATS OF PENOLA
Clarke's Saddlery & Simcoe's Temple of Fashion built in 1865 by Matthew Clarke and in 1876, was used continuously until the adjacent new Post Office was built in 1885.

13. JANE BALNAVES GENERAL STORE
Built in 1886 as the Bank of South Australia, which failed during the 1890s depression.

14. JANE BALNAVES GENERAL STORE
Opened in 1886. Operated continuously until Janis & Son Robert moved the business to Church Street in 1892.

15. MICKAY'S BLACKSMITH
James Mickay conducted a coach building and blacksmith business on this site. Mickay and others followed. Marion Mickay donated the land for the Mickay Memorial kindergarten which was home to the primary junior class.

16. NATIONAL AUSTRALIA BANK
Built in 1880 by James and Joseph Riddoch. Foundation stone laid with Masonic Honours. The architect was Thomas Artauld.

17. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Built as a Foresters' Hall in 1873. The building has also been used as a Masonic Hall.

18. PENOLA PARK
Built around the turn of the century by Ralph Howard, part owner and Manager of the adjacent Hindoo Cheese Factory. (Loots & Loots Booking Office).

19. COBB & CO BOOKING OFFICE
Repeatedly used by Cobb & Co. and in 1897 became the Penola Cheese and Butter Factory as a cheese and butter factory. The building was a victory over its predecessors.

20. PENOLA POST OFFICE & RESIDENCE
Built in 1888 as the Methodist Church in 1948 after the construction of a new Methodist Church the property was sold to the Penola RSL then to the Penola Catholic Society.

21. LIVE LIFE DESIGN
Built as a residence in 1863. It was used as a residence and B&B accommodation and in 1876 became the Penola Cheese and Butter Factory as a cheese and butter factory. The building was a victory over its predecessors.

22. PIPPERS OF PENOLA RESTAURANT
This building was constructed as a Methodist Church in 1948 after the construction of a new Methodist Church the property was sold to the Penola RSL then to the Penola Catholic Society.

23. PRIVATE RESIDENCE
Built around the turn of the century by Ralph Howard, part owner and Manager of the adjacent Hindoo Cheese Factory. (Loots & Loots Booking Office).

24. CORB & CO BOOKING OFFICE
Repeatedly used by Cobb & Co. and in 1897 became the Penola Cheese and Butter Factory as a cheese and butter factory. The building was a victory over its predecessors.

25. PENOLA POST OFFICE & RESIDENCE
Built in 1888 as the Methodist Church in 1948 after the construction of a new Methodist Church the property was sold to the Penola RSL then to the Penola Catholic Society.

26. SAINT JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
Built in 1898 by William Gammon. The detached kitchen was a common feature of these buildings, with the constant threat to life and property from open fires. It was pressed metal tiles, manufactured by Morewood and Robertson, and were intentionally prior to the introduction of corrugated iron.

27. WILSON COTTAGE
Home of William Wilson, nursey man, and his wife Agnes.

28. PETTICOAT LANE HERITAGE AREA
Listed on plaque at the site.

29. PETTICOAT LANE HERITAGE AREA
Information on plaque at the site

30. WILSON COTTAGE
Home of Elisabeth Air built in the early 1860s. This building has been continually occupied as a residence since that time.

31. MOSTHOMPSONS

32. DAVIDSON COTTAGE
Built by the Blight family. This was demolished and replaced with the present building in 1963.

33. SHARREY'S COTTAGE
First home of Christopher and Ellen Sharam, built in 1855. Second cottage built in 1864.

34. PRIVATE RESIDENCE
Home of Elisabeth Air built in the early 1860s. This building has been continually occupied as a residence since that time.

35. MICKAY'S BLACKSMITH
James Mickay conducted a coach building and blacksmith business on this site. Mickay and others followed. Marion Mickay donated the land for the Mickay Memorial kindergarten which was home to the primary junior class.

36. PENOLA PARK
Built in 1870 by James and Joseph Riddoch. Foundation stone laid with Masonic Honours by John Riddoch. The architect was W T Gore.

37. COOMBE COTTAGE
Built as a residence in 1863. It was used as a residence and B&B accommodation and in 1876 became the Penola Cheese and Butter Factory as a cheese and butter factory. The building was a victory over its predecessors.

38. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Built as a residence in 1863. It was used as a residence and B&B accommodation and in 1876 became the Penola Cheese and Butter Factory as a cheese and butter factory. The building was a victory over its predecessors.

39. MICKAY'S BLACKSMITH
James Mickay conducted a coach building and blacksmith business on this site. Mickay and others followed. Marion Mickay donated the land for the Mickay Memorial kindergarten which was home to the primary junior class.

40. PEAKE'S FOLLY
Built as a residence in 1863. It was used as a residence and B&B accommodation and in 1876 became the Penola Cheese and Butter Factory as a cheese and butter factory. The building was a victory over its predecessors.

41. PETTICOAT LANE HERITAGE AREA
Listed on plaque at the site.

42. PETTICOAT LANE HERITAGE AREA
National Trust owned

43. PENOLA POST OFFICE & RESIDENCE
Built in 1888 as the Methodist Church in 1948 after the construction of a new Methodist Church the property was sold to the Penola RSL then to the Penola Catholic Society.

44. PENOLA POST OFFICE & RESIDENCE
Built in 1888 as the Methodist Church in 1948 after the construction of a new Methodist Church the property was sold to the Penola RSL then to the Penola Catholic Society.

45. PENOLA POST OFFICE & RESIDENCE
Built in 1888 as the Methodist Church in 1948 after the construction of a new Methodist Church the property was sold to the Penola RSL then to the Penola Catholic Society.

46. PENOLA POST OFFICE & RESIDENCE
Built in 1888 as the Methodist Church in 1948 after the construction of a new Methodist Church the property was sold to the Penola RSL then to the Penola Catholic Society.

47. PENOLA POST OFFICE & RESIDENCE
Built in 1888 as the Methodist Church in 1948 after the construction of a new Methodist Church the property was sold to the Penola RSL then to the Penola Catholic Society.

48. PENOLA POST OFFICE & RESIDENCE
Built in 1888 as the Methodist Church in 1948 after the construction of a new Methodist Church the property was sold to the Penola RSL then to the Penola Catholic Society.

49. PENOLA POST OFFICE & RESIDENCE
Built in 1888 as the Methodist Church in 1948 after the construction of a new Methodist Church the property was sold to the Penola RSL then to the Penola Catholic Society.