



# Mosaics of Merbein

## Unleash your inner artist and immerse yourself in the Mosaics of Merbein Art Trail.

This unique masterpiece winds through the heart of Merbein, showcasing the creativity and spirit of this fascinating town. Informally led by the Merbein District History Society, this collaboration between Cultivator Inc, Lower Murray Water and the Merbein community are a reflection of the township, its people and the vibrant local culture. It's a captivating open-air art experience not to be missed.



### Your day at a glance

- **Early Merbein Produce** (Ranfurly Way, Merbein VIC)
- **Early Irrigation Settlement** (Ranfurly Way, Merbein VIC)
- **Indigenous Life at Mondellimin** (Corner of Ranfurly Way & River Avenue, Merbein VIC)
- **Merbein Historical Society** (Corner of Ranfurly Way & River Avenue, Merbein VIC)
- **River Reflections of the Merbein White Cliffs** (Corner of Ranfurly Way & River Avenue, Merbein VIC)
- **Significant Merbein Buildings** (Corner of Reilly & Game Streets, Merbein VIC)
- **Two Early Merbein Pioneers** (Corner of Reilly & Game Streets, Merbein VIC)
- **Merbein P-10 College** (Corner of Reilly & Game Streets, Merbein VIC)
- **The Great Australian Vanilla Slice Triumph** (Corner of Reilly & Game Streets, Merbein VIC)
- **The Merbein Centenary Celebrations** (Corner of Channel Road & Park Street, Merbein VIC)
- **Early Life on a Merbein Irrigation Block** (Corner of Reilly & Game Streets, Merbein VIC)
- **The Merbein Fruit Packing Sheds** (Corner of Reilly & Game Streets, Merbein VIC)
- **Wakefield Transport Group** (Channel Road, Merbein VIC)
- **Sunraysia Community Health Services** (Channel Road, Merbein VIC)



Your first stop is at Chaffey Park. Here you will be feasting your eyes (and maybe your stomach) on the **Early Merbein Produce Mural** (Ranfurly Way, Merbein). It's like a giant Instagram post of all the delicious things Merbein is famous for. Think juicy grapes and sunshine-y citrus. Spot the towering palm tree for a tropical touch and see if you can find the hidden clue dedicated to Merbein's temperance past— a hint, it's not a giant glass of wine (although that would be pretty cool too).

Next up, behind the Merbein Produce Mural you will uncover the **Early Irrigation Settlement Mural** (Ranfurly Way, Merbein VIC). Hop back in time and explore Merbein's fascinating beginnings. Your eyes will be drawn to the chugging Merbein steam train, which puffed its way into town in 1910. You'll also see a depiction of the old irrigation pumps which were used to feed Merbein's thirsty orchards and citrus groves.

A short distance from here, dive a bit deeper into Merbein's rich history, uncovering stories from its ancient First Nations past at the **Indigenous Life at Mondellimin Mural** (Corner of Ranfurly Way & River Avenue, Merbein VIC). This mural will take you back in time over 150 years to 1857. Get a glimpse of what life was like for the Nyeri Nyeri people at Mondellimin (Chaffey Landing) through a rare snapshot. This hidden gem also captures a group of young people engaged in a kicking game, possibly the earliest image of what would evolve into Australia's iconic sport, Aussie Rules Football.

Next up at the same spot, delve into a treasure trove of local history at the **Merbein District Historical Society Mural** (Corner of Ranfurly Way & River Avenue, Merbein VIC). Founded in 1997, their logo, overflowing with fruits and veggies, reflects the town's agricultural abundance.

Your next stop takes you to a place of natural wonder, the **River Reflections of the Merbein White Cliffs Mural** (Corner of Ranfurly Way & River Avenue, Merbein VIC). These towering sandstone giants, which you will see illustrated, reaching over 30 metres high and have stood guard over the Murray River for millions of years. Imagine early European explorers navigating the river, using these majestic white cliffs as a landmark. Interestingly, the town itself was originally called "White Cliffs" until 1912, a testament to the cliffs' enduring presence.

### Plan ahead - calling all history buffs!

**Merbein District Historical Society** (121 Commercial Road, Merbein VIC)

Here, you'll get a chance to chat with friendly, local history buffs and explore exhibits showcasing Merbein's fascinating past. The historical society even played a key role in creating this Mosaics of Merbein Art Trail. So, get ready to be amazed by the fascinating stories and historical relics waiting to be discovered.

Open: Thursdays 2-4pm and Merbein Market days 2-4pm (3rd Sunday of the month). T: 0439 816 466

## Insider Tips

- Head out to the **Blandowski Walk** and **Merbein Lookout**, the highest viewing point of the Murray River in our region. Soak up the breathtaking views and marvel at the white cliffs you see in front of you – a fitting touch to your visit to Merbein we think.



Continue your tour to the corner of Reilly and Game Streets to catch a glimpse of the **Significant Merbein Buildings Mural** – a giant postcard of key sites. Be mesmerised by creative depictions of the Merbein State School and King George V Memorial Band Rotundas. Keep an eye out for a quirky addition – a reported UFO sighting from the 1930s. History buffs will appreciate the inclusion of the Merbein Fire Station and the poignant Memorial Pillars at Kenny Park. You'll even see the former CWA Hall, a cornerstone of the local community, and admire the impressive Art Deco style of Bowring's Departmental Store. Finally, take a moment to reflect at the beautiful Church of England, a testament to Merbein's rich heritage.

At the same location, the **Two Early Merbein Pioneers Mural** (Corner of Reilly and Game Streets, Merbein VIC) pays tribute to two local legends who helped shape Merbein's story. Elizabeth Fisher, the town's first Post Mistress, wasn't just about stamps and parcels. A true community champion, she also ran a successful store and volunteered her time to countless organisations. Edward "Pat" Kenny, a brilliant engineer, was the mastermind behind Merbein's irrigation system. Nicknamed the "Father of Merbein", he tirelessly transformed the area into a thriving irrigation settlement. Their dedication and vision continue to inspire Merbein's spirit to this day.

Next, let's take a moment to admire a vibrant symbol of Merbein's community spirit – a mosaic masterpiece created by the talented students of **Merbein P-10 College** (Corner of Reilly & Game Streets, Merbein VIC). The school, formed in 2010 by merging four local institutions, is a testament to the town's collaborative spirit. Get ready to be dazzled by the students' artistic vision and creativity, as their mosaic artwork reflects the heart and soul of Merbein.

Continue your trail, heading east, to your next mural. At the corner of Channel Road and Park Street you will find one dedicated to one of Merbein's most celebrated events – **The Great Australian Vanilla Slice Triumph**. Look at this delicious mural, with the iconic Vanilla Slice logo in the centre, surrounded by all sorts of mouthwatering treats. This mural isn't just a feast for the eyes, it's a reminder of an event that brought together bakers and foodies from all over.

On the other side, you will discover the **Merbein Centenary Celebrations of 2009 Mural** (Corner of Channel Road and Park Street, Merbein VIC). Look at all the wonderful things that make Merbein special. See those juicy grapes? They're a big part of the region's history. And that single-blade plough? Imagine the hard work that went into starting this town. Sports fans will love the nods to footy and cricket. There's even a peek at the Abbotsford Bridge. You can also spot the paddle steamer cruising down the river – a reminder of Merbein's connection to the mighty Murray. And the green pump which used to bring life-giving water to the land, and now it's enjoying its retirement in Chaffey Park. This mural is a real treasure trove of Merbein's story.

At the same spot, check out an amazing mural that takes you back to the **Early Life on a Merbein Irrigation Block** (Corner of Reilly & Game Streets, Merbein VIC). See those two palm trees in the centre? Those were planted by the Governor himself in 1909, marking the birth of this new irrigation settlement. This mural depicts families drying fruit on giant sheets, soaking up the sun. Horses were a common sight back then, pulling carts and even getting stuck cars back on track. Look closely, and you'll even see a trusty "Block Cow" – a staple on most farms, providing fresh milk for the family. This glimpse into the past is a real reminder of the resourcefulness and resilience of Merbein's pioneers.

## Insider Tips

- See the **Merbein Arts Group** create stunning mosaics every Tuesday and Sunday. Come watch their creativity flow and get inspired by these local artists.
- Wander down Commercial Street where you'll discover the **Mosaic Flowerpots**. These feature native flora, with some designs showcasing local businesses and community groups.





While you're here, you can immerse yourself in the area's rich agricultural history and admire a mural dedicated to **The Merbein Fruit Packing Sheds** (Corner of Reilly and Game Streets, Merbein VIC). As you admire the artwork, imagine the bustling activity that once filled these sheds. Learn about the various packing processes, from dehydrating and washing dried fruit to packing citrus products. Discover the stories behind the different packing sheds, such as the Mildura Co-operative Fruit Co. Ltd. and the Aurora Packing Shed. Don't miss the chance to see the 'Raisin Joe' character, a beloved symbol of the region's fruit-packing heritage. As you explore, envision the trucks leaving the sheds, filled with delicious dried fruit, destined to delight taste buds around the world.

Just down the road, you'll find the **Wakefield Transport Group Mural** (Channel Road, Merbein VIC). It tells the story of the Wakefield Transport Group, a Merbein success story that's been chugging along since 1917. From humble beginnings with George Wakefield Sr. chopping wood, the business grew with each generation. They hauled wine, then added trucks, tankers, and even trains to move all sorts of goods – fruits, grains, you name it. By the 90s, they were a global force, shipping by land, sea, and air. Imagine warehouses and trains carrying hundreds of containers – that's impressive. A fitting tribute to the business' local roots and success.

Your last stop isn't just a picture, it's a heartfelt tribute to the **Sunraysia Community Health Services (SCHS)** (Channel Road, Merbein VIC). See the logo in the centre? Now, look closer. You will see a woman depicted. This is Sister Anne Woods, a pioneer community health nurse. You will also see a beautiful building – that's where the original Merbein Community Health Centre used to be. Back in its day, it was actually a church. The mural also shows a friendly cup of tea and cake – a reminder that sometimes a listening ear and a warm welcome are the best medicine. But healthcare was their focus, of course – that blood pressure gauge is a clear giveaway. In 2016, the SCHS moved to its new home in Mildura. Whilst organisation is no longer located in Merbein, the mural is a fitting tribute its dedication and compassion, a cornerstone of the local community.

## Insider Tip

- Not only will you find plenty of mosaics in Merbein, you'll also want to catch a glimpse of *The River Runs Through* (80 Game Street, Merbein VIC) dynamic art installation. A community project, it explores the rich narrative of the water ways found at the Merbein Common. Plan a visit in the evening when its vibrant colours are illuminated in all their glory.



More information: **Mildura Visitor Information Centre**, 180-190 Deakin Avenue, Mildura. T: 03 5018 8380.

Final image courtesy of Hawkeye Photography - Aaron Hawkins: Photographic Artist.

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