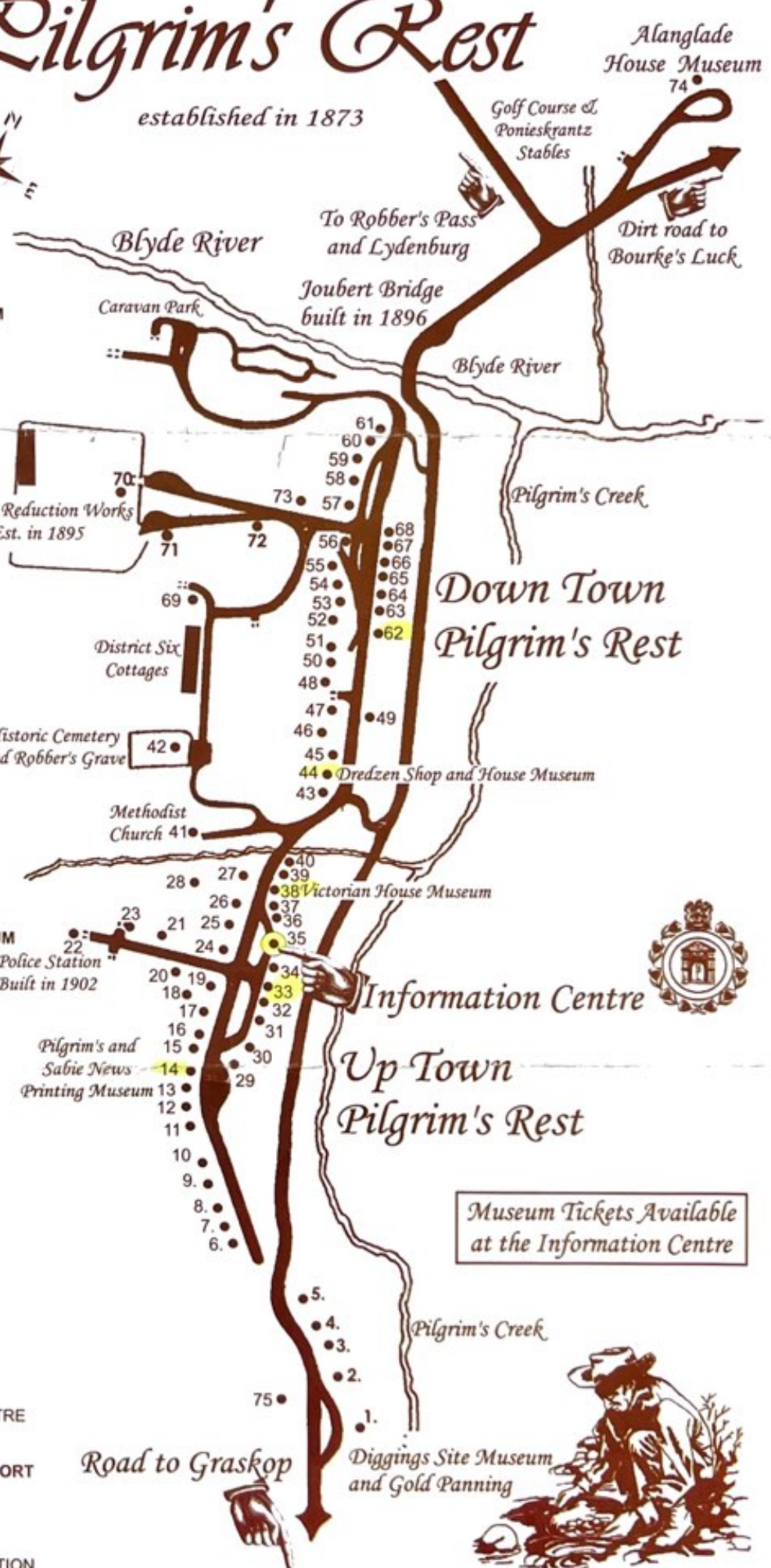


# Pilgrim's Rest

established in 1873

1. DIGGINGS MUSEUM
2. RESIDENCE
3. RESIDENCE
4. RESIDENCE
5. DROSDY
6. MEREDITH HOUSE
7. ANGLICAN CHURCH
8. LODGE BLYDE
9. TOWN HALL
10. ROSE COTTAGE
11. HALFWAY HOUSE
12. RESIDENCE
13. OLD PRINT HOUSE & MONA COTTAGE
14. PILGRIM'S & SABIE NEWS MUSEUM
15. THE IRON STORE
16. PILGRIM'S HOTEL
17. ROYAL HOTEL BOTTLE STORE & FELDMAN'S SILK MERCHANTS
18. EDWIN WOODS WINE MERCHANTS
19. MRS MACS SHOP
20. WELCOME INN
21. SQUAREFACE
22. POLICE STATION
23. MAGISTRATE'S COURT
24. ROYAL HOTEL & BAR
25. JH ALCOCK RESTAURANT
26. RESIDENCE
27. POST OFFICE
28. MONTAGUE'S
29. WAR MEMORIAL & DELVILLE WOOD OAK TREE
30. ROYAL COTTAGE
31. NUTMEG
32. CHAITOW'S
33. CENTRAL GARAGE
34. ROYAL HOTEL STABLES
35. INFORMATION CENTRE & LECTURE HALL
36. SPOTTED DOG
37. SCOTT HOUSE
38. HOUSE MUSEUM
39. BANK BUILDING & BANK HOUSE
40. VICTORIAN COTTAGE
41. METHODIST CHURCH
42. HISTORIC CEMETERY
43. SCOTT'S CAFE & RESTAURANT
44. DREDZEN STORE & HOUSE MUSEUM
45. RESIDENCE
46. RESIDENCE
47. BERETTA'S ACCOMMODATION
48. RESIDENCE
49. RESIDENCE
50. MOUNTAIN VIEW
51. POPHUIS
52. ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
53. RESIDENCE
54. THE LEATHER SHOP
55. MEYER BUILDING
56. CLEWER GENERAL DEALER
57. PILGRIM'S PLACE
58. THE DAISY
59. THE VINE RESTAURANT & PUB
60. KUZZULO'S EMPORIUM
61. BELVEDERE METAL CRAFT
62. THELWALL'S MUSEUM
63. PONIESKRANTZ ARTS & CRAFTS
64. PILGRIM'S PANTRY
65. HIGHWAYMAN'S GARAGE
66. THE NUGGET RESIDENCE
67. PILGRIM'S BAKERY
68. JUBILEE POTTERS RESTAURANT & BAR
69. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTRE
70. TGME REDUCTION WORKS MUSEUM ADMIN OFFICES PUBLIC WORKS, ROADS & TRANSPORT
71. REC HALL
72. RESIDENCE
73. DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH
74. ALANGLADE HOUSE MUSEUM
75. SAFCOL HIKERS HUT/ACCOMMODATION



Alanglade House Museum 74

Golf Course & Ponieskrantz Stables

To Robber's Pass and Lydenburg

Dirt road to Bourke's Luck

Blyde River

Joubert Bridge built in 1896

Blyde River

Caravan Park

Pilgrim's Creek

Down Town Pilgrim's Rest

TGME Reduction Works Est. in 1895

District Six Cottages

Historic Cemetery and Robber's Grave

Methodist Church 41

Victorian House Museum

Police Station Built in 1902

Pilgrim's and Sabie News Printing Museum

Information Centre



Up Town Pilgrim's Rest

Museum Tickets Available at the Information Centre

Pilgrim's Creek

Road to Graskop

Diggings Site Museum and Gold Panning





# Pilgrim's Rest

The history of the Pilgrim's Rest gold fields dates back to ancient times when unknown miners worked the quartz reefs for gold. Evidence of their diggings can still be found throughout northern and eastern South Africa and Zimbabwe. A number of insignificant gold deposits were discovered in the northern parts of South Africa between 1840 and 1870.

The first gold rush in South Africa took place in 1873 when payable gold was discovered on the farm Geelhoutboom near the town of Sabie on the Mpumalanga escarpment. President Burgers, who visited the site, named the camp "MacMac" and declared the area the New Caledonia Gold Fields. One of the MacMac diggers, Alec "Wheelbarrow" Patterson, left the immediate area to prospect further afield. Patterson found rich gold deposits in the Pilgrim's Creek. He was able to keep his find a secret for just a short time before a second prospector, William Trafford, also found gold in the same creek.

News of a rich strike triggered the first major gold rush in South Africa. Pilgrim's Rest was declared a gold field on 22 September 1873. The Gold Commissioner also moved his office to Pilgrim's Rest and by the end of 1873 there were some 1500 diggers working 4000 claims in and around Pilgrim's Rest. The valley was rich in gold with large finds also being made at Starvation Gully, Peach Tree Creek, Brown's Hill, Poverty Creek, Golden Point and Breakneck Gully.

During the first decade mining activities centred mainly on the recovering of alluvial gold. Gold was recovered from the streams and the banks of the river and creeks by means of sluice-boxes and cradles. It is estimated that R2 million worth of gold was mined during the first seven years of mining in the Pilgrim's Rest valley.

Pilgrim's Rest was the social and commercial centre of the diggings which comprised of the Upper, Middle and Lower Camps. By 1896 many of the tents had been replaced by more permanent buildings. The scale of the Pilgrim's Rest

gold fields cannot be compared with that of Australia or California, but it did produce a large amount of gold and for some time caused much excitement in South Africa.

After the First War of Independence (1880-1881) the reinstated Republican government instituted a policy of granting concessions to individuals and companies in an effort to stimulate industries. In 1881 David Benjamin, a London financier, obtained the mining rights to Pilgrim's Rest and the surrounding area. Benjamin compensated the remaining diggers for their claims which he then consolidated with the formation of the Transvaal Gold Exploration Company. In 1895, this company, along with other smaller companies, amalgamated to form the Transvaal Gold Mining Estates (TGME).

The resident minister of the St. Mary's Anglican Church at the time, wrote "Soon all will be organised and everyone managed".

The histories of the Transvaal Gold Mining Estates and Pilgrim's Rest are inseparably linked. Both shared the fluctuating fortunes of the mines. An average of 300 000 tons of ore per annum was mined in the period 1930 - 1950. In the fifties ore production fell to an average of 50 000 tons per year. In times of affluence there were up to 16 general dealers in the village. However there were also hard times when the mining company had to contend with sub quality ore, unstable ground, a scarcity of labour and periodic floods. In 1972 the Beta mine ceased operations as the last operational mine in Pilgrim's Rest.

The village, however, has survived to become a Provincial Heritage Site, National Icon and living museum.

## **PILGRIM'S REST MUSEUM**

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