

Welcome to Cloncurry

THE FRIENDLY HEART OF THE GREAT NORTH WEST

In 1861 Burke and Wills with King and Gray, were the first known Europeans to come into the area on their ill fated expedition to the Gulf of Carpentaria. Burke named the river "Cloncurry" for his cousin, Lady Elizabeth Cloncurry of County Galway in Ireland. In May 1867, Ernest Henry (honoured as founder of the town and the vast mineral wealth of the district), came this way searching for grazing land, instead he discovered copper, he named his find the Great Australia. The town was surveyed in 1876 and named after the river.

Over the years Cloncurry has been the focal point for many of Australia's greatest innovations. Cloncurry was involved with the beginnings of QANTAS, and the original QANTAS Hanger is still in use at the aerodrome, where "Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Service" is still displayed above the hanger door. The Royal Flying Doctor Service was founded here in 1928, now recognised the world over. The airport was also on route for early planes coming from overseas and a stopping place for contestants in the great air races of 1919 and 1934. During the Second World War, Cloncurry was the site of a major United States of America Air Base.

The railway reached Cloncurry in 1907 (opened official in 1908) and remains an important railway town. A visit to the Museums at the Cloncurry/Mary Kathleen Memorial Park Complex or John Flynn Place Museum will open the eye of any budding historian to the richness of Cloncurry's history.

Cloncurry is a rural town, which derives its main income from the mining and pastoral industries. The town itself is nestled on the banks of the Cloncurry River, the river and Chinaman Creek Dam, situated approximately 3km from the town centre, provides the town's water supply. Many residents supplement household supplies during the summer months with private bores. The Cloncurry River catchment area begins in the Selwyn Ranges and flows into the Flinders River where it continues on to empty into the Gulf of Carpentaria. The average annual rainfall is 500mm/20ins, with the heaviest falls being experienced between December and March. Cloncurry is noted for having Australia's highest recorded temperature.

CLONCURRY 2 DAY ITINERARY

DAY 1

Call in to the Visitor Information Centre at the Cloncurry / Mary Kathleen Memorial Park Complex – The historic Police Station was previously at Oona and then Dobbyn (old mining towns in the early part of the 20th Century); the building was moved and renovated again for use as a Police Station at Mary Kathleen. After the town closed, the building was moved to the Cloncurry/Mary Kathleen Memorial Park, where it now services as a Visitor Information Centre & gift shop, here you can also obtain Fossickers Licences and mud maps. See Robert O'Hara Burkes (Burke and Wills fame) water bottle, along with the history and photographs.

Open Weekdays from 8am – 4.30pm (February to December)

Weekends and Public Holidays 9am – 3pm (May to October)

Displays in the Outdoor Museum at the park include steam engines, a McLaren traction engine, farm and mining machinery. See the unique Ford rail Ambulance and other railway memorabilia on display in the Kuridala building. The Park Complex also features public amenities, a lovely picnic barbecue area, and children's playground, then follow the path to the lookout with spectacular views of Cloncurry and the surrounding country side.

A new Visitor Information Centre and Cloncurry Unearthed Museum is under construction and scheduled to open November 2012

The Chinese cemetery – *located on the junction of Copper Mine creek and Anabranch* is the resting-place of many Chinese gold miners who worked in the Cloncurry District at the turn of the last century. Access to this Cemetery is off the heavy vehicle by-pass road at the Anabranch then take the old road and park under bridge.

Cloncurry's First Cemetery – *Located off Sir Hudson Fysh Drive, right of Golf Club road.* Graves from Cloncurry's early days, unable to establish how many are buried here, burials ceased around the 1880's when the Cloncurry General Cemetery was opened.

The Cloncurry Cemetery – *located on Sir Hudson Fysh Drive* where graves date back to the 1880's. It is the resting place of Cloncurry's first schoolteacher, Mary Allen who died on the 12th February 1899, from heat exhaustion while travelling between the Gorge and Cloncurry and two miners who were killed in July 1907 from an accident at the Great Australia Mine. Dame Mary Gilmore D.B.E, who is featured on the ten-dollar note, also rests in our old cemetery. After her death in Sydney in 1962, Dame Mary was accorded a state funeral from St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church in Macquarie St and her ashes were interred in the grave of her husband.

The Afghan Cemetery – *North West corner of the Cloncurry Cemetery* has graves of a few Afghan camel train drivers and a Mohammedan Priest (Syid OMar). All graves face north – south toward Mecca. These graves date from around the turn of the century to the 1950's. Cloncurry was Queensland's largest "Ghantown" in the late 1890's and early 1900's. It was estimated that there were more than 200 Afghan Cameleers and 2000 camels providing transport in the Cloncurry District.

St. Colman's Catholic Church – *Sir Hudson Fysh Drive built in 1907.*

DAY 2

John Flynn Place Museum and Art Gallery – *Corner of King and Daintree Streets* is a tribute to John Flynn and the Flying Doctor Service, which began in Cloncurry in May 1928. The centre has three floors with history of The Royal Flying Doctor Service and a range of memorabilia, from the original Traeger Transceiver, to a model of the Victory (the first plane used by the Flying Doctor). The top floor is the Fred McKay art Gallery, which displays winners of the Annual Ernest Henry Art Show; this event draws artists from all over Australia to submit their artwork. Whilst here, why not take a walk through the Cloncurry Gardens, a relaxing spot to wonder and enjoy, see also the cloister of plaques commemorating the life and work of the pioneer radio engineers and operators, the original flying doctors, the first aerial medical pilots and early patrol padres.

Open Weekdays 8.30am – 4.30pm

Weekends and Public Holidays, 9am to 3pm (May to October)

The Cloncurry Sale Yards – *Sir Hudson Fysh Drive* is the largest saleyards in North West Queensland.

The Airport – *Sir Hudson Fysh Drive*, the original hanger with Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Service (Qantas) still on the front. See the monument to commemorate Qantas, when it flew its first passenger (Alexander Kennedy) from Longreach to Cloncurry on November 3rd 1922 at a cost of 11 pounds 2 shillings, other Monuments to commemorate the RFDS and Battle of the Coral Seas, to name a few.

Post Office – *Corner of Scarr and Sheaffe Street*, Cloncurry was designated a Country Post Office in 1871, a money order office in 1883 and an official electric telegraph station that same year. This building was refurbished in the 1990s Australia's record temperature was recorded here on the 16th January 1889 of 127.5deg (53.1c). Post Office is a Heritage listed building.

Court House – *Corner of Daintree and Sheafee Street* built in 1898.

Visitors can observe the court room through the glass door from 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday. Further information is available at the Visitor Information Centre at the Cloncurry/Mary Kathleen Park Complex. The Courthouse is a Heritage listed building.

Cloncurry Pharmacy – *Ramsay Street* began in the early part of the last century as AJ Smith Stores, has seen many name changes from those early days as a general store to the very modern well equipped pharmacy it is today, been last refurbished in 2007/08

Brodie Home Hardware Store – *Corner of Scarr and Sheaffe Street* came from Normanton and was owned by A.J. Smith & Co. who operated a business in Cloncurry from circa 1888 at the bottom end of Ramsay Street. In 1928 this building was dismantled and shipped to Townsville, then railed to Cloncurry and erected at a cost of one thousand pounds (\$2,000). The store was owned and operated by A.J. Smith & Co., until 1986 when it was sold. January 1987 it opened for business as Brodie & Co.

Post Office Hotel – *Corner of Scarr and Sheaffe Street* previously named the Union Hotel in the late 1800's. The Union became known as the Post Office Hotel in 1901, where an extensive rebuild was completed in 1908. The hotel however was destroyed in 1914 by fire. After yet another rebuild, it became one of the finest hotels in North West Queensland. A fire just prior to 1932 claimed a further victory. The hotel as it stands today is the fourth in succession on this corner.

Central Hotel – *Corner Scarr and Sheaffee Street* built in the early 1900's. The Central Hotel was formally on the Southern corner of this block but was destroyed by fire in February 1910 and was rebuilt to where it stands today.

Shire Hall – *Scarr Street* built in 1939. The newly refurbished hall reopened on 16 May 2003.

Wagon Wheel Motel and Prince of Wales Historic Inn – *Ramsay Street*, established as the Prince of Wales Hotel in 1876. This building was built after a large fire destroyed the previous hotel in 1926. The hotel was closed in 1974 and opened as the Wagon Wheel Restaurant some time later. It remains as the oldest liquor license premises in North West Queensland.

National Australia Bank – *Ramsay Street*, present branch opened November 2007, though the National Bank began its services in Cloncurry from the early 1880's.

Leichhardt Hotel – *Scarr Street*, built 1926. The original façade has been classified by the National Trust and has been rebuilt around the original façade.

Rotary Lookout – *2kms West of Cloncurry*, adjacent to the old water tower near Normanton turnoff.

Chinaman Creek Dam & Recreational Area – *3kms West of Cloncurry*, near Normanton turnoff. Nature walks, fishing & birdlife.

Uniting Church – *King Street*, present church built circa 1959, the original church was transported from Charters Towers in the early 1900s.

Chaplain's Newsagency – *Corner of Ramsay and King Street*, established first as a grocery store, known as Cloncurry Stores. This was also the site of the Club Hotel, which was destroyed by fire in 1936

St Andrews Anglican Church – *Uhr Street*, completed in 1964 this building replaced the original, which was built in 1907 and is now situated behind this church in Seymour Street.

Railway Station – *Hutchinson Parade*, present building built 1966, replacing the original Station, which was situated top end of Scarr Street. The Railway line reached Cloncurry in December of 1907, official opened 1908.