

# *Welcome to Cloncurry*

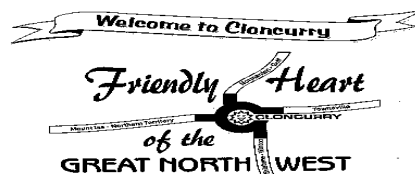
## **THE FRIENDLY HEART OF THE GREAT NORTH WEST**

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 this 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 and remains an important railway town. A visit to the Museums: Mary Kathleen Memorial Park or John Flynn Place 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. With the heaviest falls being experienced between December and March. Cloncurry is noted for having Australia's highest recorded temperature in 1889 (53.1c).



**Mary Kathleen Memorial Park Information Centre & Museum**  
McIlwraith Street Phone (07) 47 421361 Fax (07) 47 421712  
**John Flynn Place Museum "Home of the Royal Flying Doctor"**  
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# CLONCURRY 2 DAY ITINERARY

## DAY 1

Visit the Cloncurry / Mary Kathleen Memorial Park – the old Town Office building, houses memorabilia from the Mary Kathleen Uranium Mine and Township as well as local history and photographs. The showpiece is Robert O’Hara Burkes (Burke and Wills fame) water bottle, along with the history and photographs. See the Rock and Mineral display, which, is ranked by experts to be one of the most comprehensive in Australia.

The historic Police Station was previously at Oona and then Dobbyn (old mining towns in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> 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 kiosk, souvenir shop and Tourist Information Centre, where you can also obtain Fossickers Licences and mud maps.

**Open Weekdays from 8am – 4.30pm**

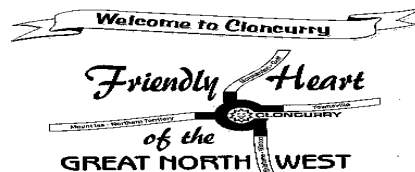
**Weekends and Public Holidays 9am – 3pm (May to October)**

Displays in the Outdoor Museum at the park include steam engines, a traction engine, farm and mining machinery. The Park also features public amenities, a lovely picnic barbecue area. Then follow the path to the lookout with spectacular views of Cloncurry. **Ernest Henry Mine Tours** depart from the Park every Wednesday and Friday at 10am, bookings are taken at the Tourist Information Centre before 9.30am on day of tour (**during Tourist Season May to Oct**)

**The Chinese cemetery** – *located on the junction of Copper Mine creek and Anabran*ch is the resting-place of many Chinese gold miners who worked in the Cloncurry District at the turn of the last century.

**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 12<sup>th</sup> 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 many graves of Afghan camel train drivers and a Mohammedan Priest (Syid OMar). All



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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 has some beautiful artwork on display, collected from the annual Ernest Henry Art Competition, which draws artists from all over Australia to submit their work. Whilst here, why not take a walk through the beautiful Cloncurry Gardens.

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

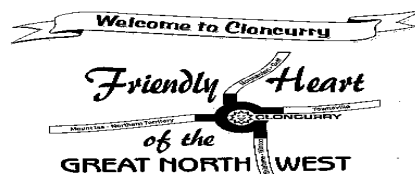
**The Cloncurry Sale Yards** – *Sir Hudson Fysh Drive* is the largest saleyards in North West Queensland.

**The Airport** – *Sir Hudson Fysh Drive*, the original hanger with Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Service (Qantas) still on the front. Monument to commemorate Qantas, when it flew its first passenger (Alexander Kennedy) from Longreach to Cloncurry on November 3<sup>rd</sup> 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*, built in 1885 and refurbished in the 1990's. Cloncurry was designated a Country Post Office in 1871, a money order office in 1883 and an official electric telegraph station that same year. Australia's record temperature was recorded here on the 16<sup>th</sup> January 1889 of 127.5deg (53.1c).

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

**Brodie Hardware Store** – *Corner of Scarr and Sheaffe Street* came from Normanton and was owned by A.J. Smith & Co. who operated a business there in 1888. 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



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by A.J. Smith & Co., until 1986 when it was sold. January 1987 it opened for business as Brodie & Co. Now operating as Home Hardware.

**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 Sheaffe 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.

**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, or when burials ceased.

**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** – *Sheaffe Street*, present building built in 1966. Though the National Bank began its services here since the 1880's.

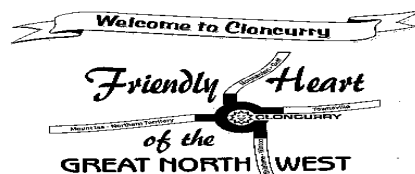
**Leichardt Hotel** – *Scarr Street*, built 1926. The original façade has been classified by the National Trust and has been rebuilt around the original façade.

**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 & birdlife.

**Uniting Church** – *King Street*, built in 1966 this building replaced the original built in 1915.

**Cloncurry Pharmacy** – *Ramsay Street* began in the early part of the last century as AJ Smith Stores.



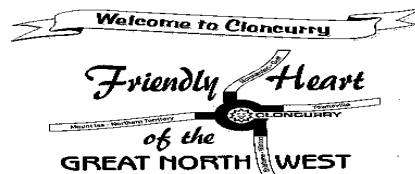
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**Chaplain's Newsagency** – *Corner of Ramsay and King Street*, established first as a grocery store, known as Cloncurry Stores. Site of the Club Hotel, which was destroyed by fire in 1936.

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

## ***NOTES***



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