

Town Gazette History

St George:

The largest town in the Balonne Shire, St George is often referred to by visitors as an 'an oasis'. The name of St George was bestowed upon the site when renowned explorer Sir Thomas Mitchell and his party made crossing on the Balonne River on St George's Day, the 23rd April, 1846 during his expedition in 1846.

St George is situated on the banks of the beautiful Balonne River and has a population of approximately 3000 people. Visitors and locals can picnic and venture along the Riverland Parkland that stretches along the town reaches or the more active can ski or fish for cod or yellowbelly on the river or at Beardmore Dam. The streets of St George are abuzz with activity as it services the Balonne Shire population of some 5000 people and is the major centre for business, shopping and entertainment. The Balonne Shire is predominately a rural based economy with production consisting of cotton, wheat, cattle, goats, sheep, table grapes, wine, rockmelons, soybeans, sorghum and various forms of nuts and legumes. Things to see and do include: a visit to the 'Unique Egg' (World Expo accredited display of carved, illuminated emu eggs); taste the local award winning wines at 'Riversands Vineyards'; walk back in history and visit the 'Heritage Centre'; enjoy the local Birdlife; appreciate the special murals; learn more about the many locally produced products or just chat to a friendly local. Great bush camping spots surround the town and there are a number of caravan parks and motel accommodation to choose from.

Dirranbandi:

In 1885, the town site was surveyed and named Dirranbandi which according to the Place names Board of Qld means "swamp abounding in frogs and waterfowl". Key attractions at Dirranbandi include Railway Park where the old Railway Station Master's Office built in 1913 still stands; enjoy a tour of Cubbie Station one of the largest privately owned cotton properties in Australia. Camping and fishing are popular activities along the Balonne Minor.

Hebel:

A small community of approximately 30 situated just inside the Queensland border. It has been claimed that Dan Kelly and Steve Hart from the legendary Ned Kelly gang resided in the Hebel area under assumed names. Attractions not to be missed when passing through Hebel include the Hebel Store established in 1897 and attached to it is the old Hebel Dance Hall plus the Hebel Hotel, built in 1894 still with a hitching rail to tether their horses and featuring some interesting artwork.

Mungindi:

Mungindi was named by the Aboriginal people and it means 'digging for waterplace'. Located on the Barwon River that forms part of the QLD/NSW border, the village of Mungindi was declared in 1888. Mungindi is unique as it is the only town in Australia that shares a name and is separated by a border. Today, two state governments and two Shire Councils cooperate to provide facilities for the town. The oldest established business built in 1908 is the Racecourse Hotel or more fondly known to the locals as the 'Two Mile'. The Barwon River also offers plenty of fishing and picnic spots for visitors to Mungindi. Key attractions include the Historical Park, Neeworra Historical Site and One Ton Post.

Bollon:

Bollon township situated on the banks of the picturesque Wallam Creek was first recognised as a town in 1879. Over the years there has been much discussion as to how the town came to be known as 'Bollon on the Wallam'. Apparently the creek was known by the local Aboriginals as 'Bolion' and was later adopted by the white settlers as Bollon. Research suggests that a Bolion was a type of aboriginal stone axe. Wallam Creek is the habitat of a large Koala population which thrives on the abundant river Red Gum in the area and over 110 species of birds have been recorded in the area, some of which are quite rare. Wallam Creek also a great spot for bush camping with facilities provided. A key attraction is the Heritage and Craft Centre filled with details on Bollon. The town is also close to Thrushton National Park.

Thallon:

In 1911 the Minister for Lands resumed an area for closer settlement and 780 acres were gazetted as a town reserve. Development continued, including stores and a hotel to cater for the railway employees and the town of Thallon emerged. The town was named after the then Commissioner of Railways, Mr J F Thallon. Key attractions: Bullamon Homestead built in the 1860's and still retains original shingle roof. Appointments can be made by phoning 4625 9110, learn more about the grain industry by visiting the wheat silos, see the murals and riverside camping available at Barneys Beach.