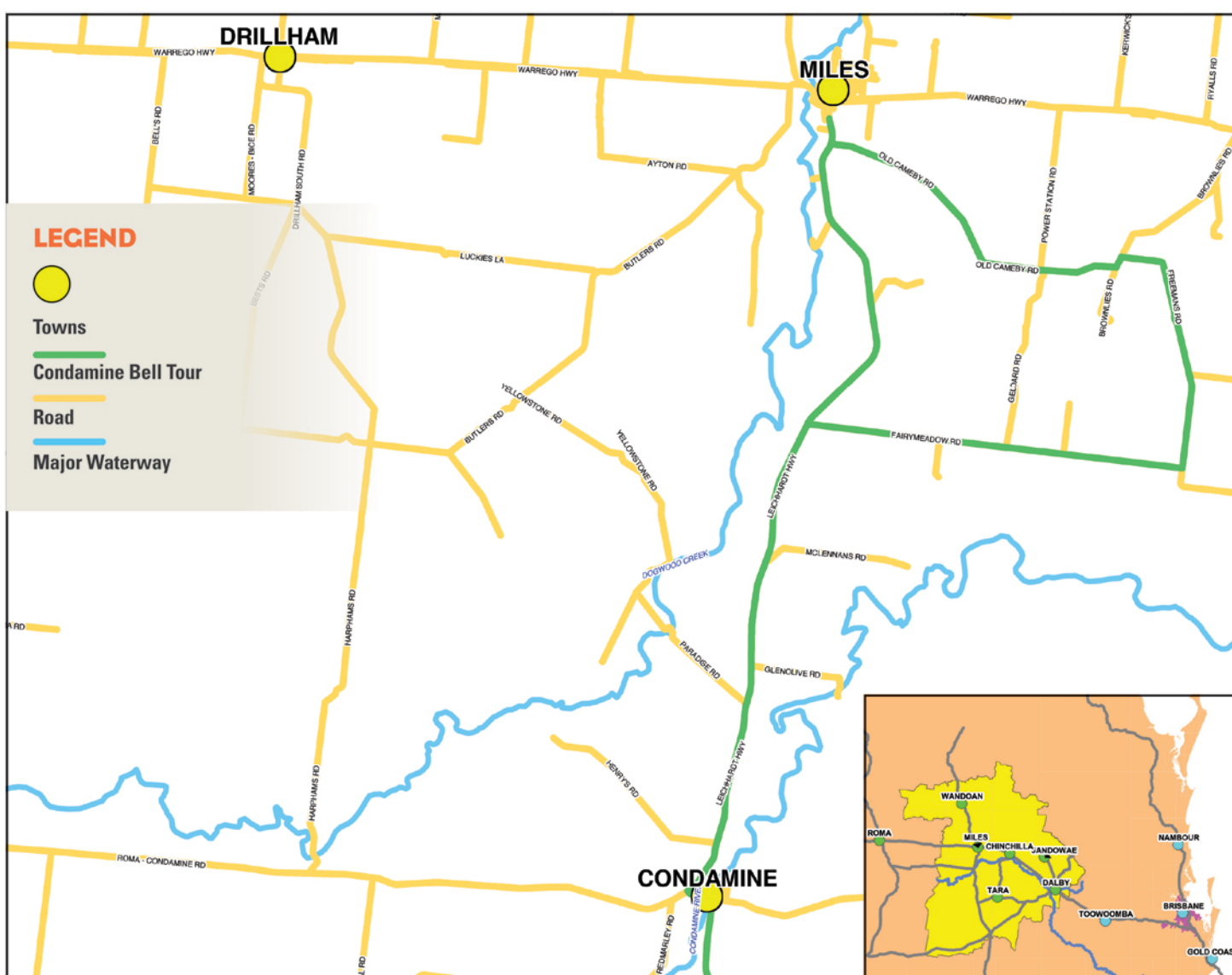


CONDAMINE Bell Tour

Welcome to Condamine! Why not venture off the main highways to immerse yourself in the true heart of the Western Downs.

Experience Western Downs

It's the people that make it.



ASK A LOCAL

We hope you enjoy your stay. The information is a guide only. Always drive to conditions and if in doubt, ask a local!

Dalby Visitor Information Centre
Thomas Jack Park
Cnr Drayton & Condamine Streets
DALBY QLD 4405
(07) 4679 4461
dalby.vic@wdrc.qld.gov.au
OPENING HOURS:
Monday to Friday 9am - 4.30pm
Saturday 10am - 2pm
Sunday 10am - 12pm

Chinchilla Visitor Information Centre
Warrego Highway (opposite Pioneer Cemetery)
CHINCHILLA QLD 4413
(07) 4660 7291
chinchilla.vic@wdrc.qld.gov.au
OPENING HOURS:
Monday – Friday 9am-5pm
Saturday – 9am-1pm
Sunday - 10am-12pm

Miles Visitor Information Centre
Miles Historical Village Museum
Murilla Street
MILES QLD 4415
(07) 4627 1492
miles.vic@wdrc.qld.gov.au
OPENING HOURS:
Monday to Sunday 8am - 5pm

← (turn left) To Condamine

37.8km As you are heading to Condamine, note the quality grazing and farming country.

42.6km **Miles Aerodrome on the left.** The airstrip was built in June 1942 by the Civil Construction Core of the Armed Forces. While commercial flights have previously operated, it is now used mainly for the flying doctor service and charter flights. To cater for the expanding energy industry, the aerodrome underwent a major expansion in 2013 with the runway now capable of taking aircraft with 50 to 74 seats. A new airport terminal was opened in 2016.

43.9km **"Rayford Park" on the right.** The name comes from the marriage of a Mr Rayner and a Miss Alford. It has an interesting avenue of palm trees, 78 of which were originally planted in 1938.

48.6km **"Tiereyboo" on the right.** One of the original stations in this area. Ludwig Leichhardt stayed here during his expedition in 1848.

56.0km **Follow the signs around to the left to enter Condamine.** Third town to be established in Queensland.

56.3km **Cross the Condamine River.** After the bridge turn right into Progress Park. Stop at this lovely park to read some local history or enjoy a picnic. There are a couple of memorials and a flood marker describing flood events that occurred in the town. Across the road is the famous Condamine Hotel, a favourite with locals and visitors and a great place to have lunch or dinner.

56.9km **Continue along the main street of Condamine to Bell Park on the left.** Here is a 2m replica of the famous Bullfrog Bell with an inscription about the history and purpose of these bells. A local grazier now makes replica bells available for purchase in Miles.

57.0km **Turn right onto the Leichhardt Highway heading towards Coondiwindi.**

58.2km **Turn Left Down Cemetery Road.** Condamine Cemetery at the end on the right records some of the oldest graves from the pioneering days. Walk around for an insight into the hardships faced by the early settlers.

58.2km **Turn left back onto the Leichhardt Highway.**

60.1km **Turn off to Meandarra on the right.**

64.2km **Continue on to Caliguel Lagoon on the left.** A great place to enjoy a picnic lunch or morning or afternoon tea. A popular recreation area particularly for water skiing during summer; also great for fishing and camping. Picnic tables, BBQ and toilets are available.

Return to Condamine and then back to Miles. We hope you enjoy your stay!



Condamine Bell Park, Condamine

The Condamine Bell

During the early pioneering days, when vast areas of land were unfenced, the bullock team was the only means of heavy transport to the newly settled areas.

Bullock bells were therefore a necessity in those times to enable the teamster to find his team when they had strayed from camp or the homestead, after having been unyoked overnight. The greater the sound carry of the bell, the better it was.

The most successful and popular bell was first made in Condamine by Samuel William Jones, who had a smithy by the Condamine River from early 1866 to late 1878. The "Bull-frog" or "Jones" bell, as it was first known, became famous under its better known title of the "Condamine Bell". The sounds of this bell had great carrying power and claims that it had been heard six and even seven miles away were common in those days.

The first bells were made out of pit-saw or cross-cut saw blades, which were formed, riveted and brazed. This bell tapered into a mouth instead of a normal bell shape which flares outward at the rim.

Disclaimer: All reasonable measures have been taken to ensure the information contained in this publication is accurate and current at the time of publication. Western Downs Regional Council accepts no responsibility for information that is inaccurate or out dated. This publication is a guide only. Any information provided should be viewed as information only and the user accepts sole responsibility and risk associated with the use of this information. Western Downs Regional Council accepts no responsibility or liability for loss or risk, personal or otherwise, which is incurred as a consequence, directly or indirectly, of the use and application of information in this publication. Reference to third parties and associated services and activities are provided only as a convenience, and as such, Western Downs Regional Council does not endorse any associated organisation, product or service.



Caliguel Lagoon, Condamine



Condamine Bell Tour

START Commence at Dogwood Crossing Centre and travel south on the Leichhardt Highway, following the signs to Condamine.

0.4km **Site of the former Miles Saleyards on the left.** Now the Miles Industrial Estate and a service centre/truck stop. Many property owners who used the saleyards lived a fair distance away but they owned small holding blocks close to Miles. They would drive their cattle into the holding block and then only needed to take them a short distance to the yards on sale day.

1.0km **Chinaman’s Lagoon on the right.** Drive in to explore the area further and read how the lagoon got its name.
This is also where the rabbit fence used to cross the road. Children and swaggies made a few bob by opening and closing the gate for traffic coming through.

1.7km **Turn left into Old Cameby Road.**



Miles



Miles Airport

19.1km **Entering high quality farming country.** Between November and May, dryland cotton can be seen. Other consistently high yielding crops include sorghum, wheat and chickpeas.

23.9km **Turn right in Fairymeadow Road (sealed road).** Farming areas close to the Condamine River. A hermit known locally as Mr George Mokel (or Moggil) once lived in this area. He made money by selling kangaroo skins which he would take 25km into Miles in a wheelbarrow. He never wore shoes and would stay overnight, returning home on foot again the next day. Rumour has it that Mr Mokel was well educated and could recite Shakespeare as well as large sections of the encyclopaedia.

37.8km **Back at the Leichhardt Highway.**

You Can Now
Turn right and head back to Miles.
or turn left and proceed to
Condamine for an interesting
look around the town famous for the
Condamine Bell. (See reverse)



Condamine Bell Park, Condamine

To Miles (turn right) →

43.8km **If heading back to Miles, cross the Duncan Sturrock Bridge over the Columboola Creek.** The original bridge was about 300m upstream. On the right an extraordinary rescue took place in the late 1950s. Mr Stan Bell was riding his horse in the area, which was totally covered in water due to recent rain and flooding. Nearly out of the water the horse lost its footing and Mr Bell struggled in the floodwater, eventually making his way up a nearby tree.

There he stayed until Mr Bert Geldard, on the other side of the creek heard him call for help. Mr Geldard hurried home to get the tractor and some other rescue equipment. After some rather nerve racking moments, Mr Bell was freed from the tree and paddled across the water where his horse was still waiting for him. When reaching Aldersyde, a few kilometres south of Miles, Mr Bell was asked where he had come from and his response was “from up a tree”.

The two gentleman did not formally meet until four years later when Mr Eric Geldard, a brother of Mr Bert Geldard, introduced them.



Chinaman's Lagoon, Miles

46.7km **Turn into Gil Weir on the left.** Built in 1993 as the water supply for the town of Miles. A quiet place to relax and enjoy the bush surrounds with picnic tables and facilities.

50.8km **You are now back in Miles.** We hope you enjoy your stay!

