

Parish Profile

The Anglican Parish of St George with Dirranbandi



Christ Church Anglican Church, St George

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Our Vision

- We are a small parish that is vital and filled with love for God.
- We endeavour to:
 - Embrace and include all people in their journey with Christ through worship, prayer, and pastoral care. We also try to find ways to engage with different generations and different parts of our community.
 - Holding tight to God's people in their ups and downs by reaching out to the wider community through pastoral care and practical help via Jacob's Well, our Parish Op Shop.
 - We are excited to follow whatever path God has for us including old and new - keeping our eyes fixed on Christ who calls us to follow.

'He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.'

(Ephesians 4:16)

Our Need

We are seeking a Priest who feels called by God to serve and be part of our community. Someone who can lead and create worship and teaching that inspires. Someone who has a heart to visit people in our four centres: those in town and those who live on properties. Someone who loves God and loves people. Someone who can encourage and support the team at Jacob's Well. Someone who enjoys working with and leading a team approach to ministry. Someone who will help us constructively work with the reality of four centres: St George, Dirranbadi, Thallon. and Bollon.

Our Strengths

Our strengths lie in having a congregation who have faithfully attended regularly for many years and come with a wealth of knowledge of the history of our church and parish. We have two wonderful Lay Ministers and a supportive Parish Council. We have a good history of ecumenical co-operation, with the Lutheran Pastor conducting a service on the second Sunday of the month. We support community events such as the Christmas carols as a combined Church choir. We help support the Chaplains in both the High School and the Primary School.

In St George we have amazing facilities: A beautiful hall which houses the Anglicare service. It has a kitchenette and a large space which is hired out for community events such as Art workshops, ballet and meetings. Jacob's Well

Op shop is thriving and provides a service to the community. Jacob's Well relies on the support of wonderful volunteers. It has been a very lucrative asset to the Church and has been recently air conditioned.

The rectory is a large house with 3 bedrooms and an office. It has recently had air conditioning upgraded and the interior and exterior painted and the carpeted floor covering will be replaced soon.

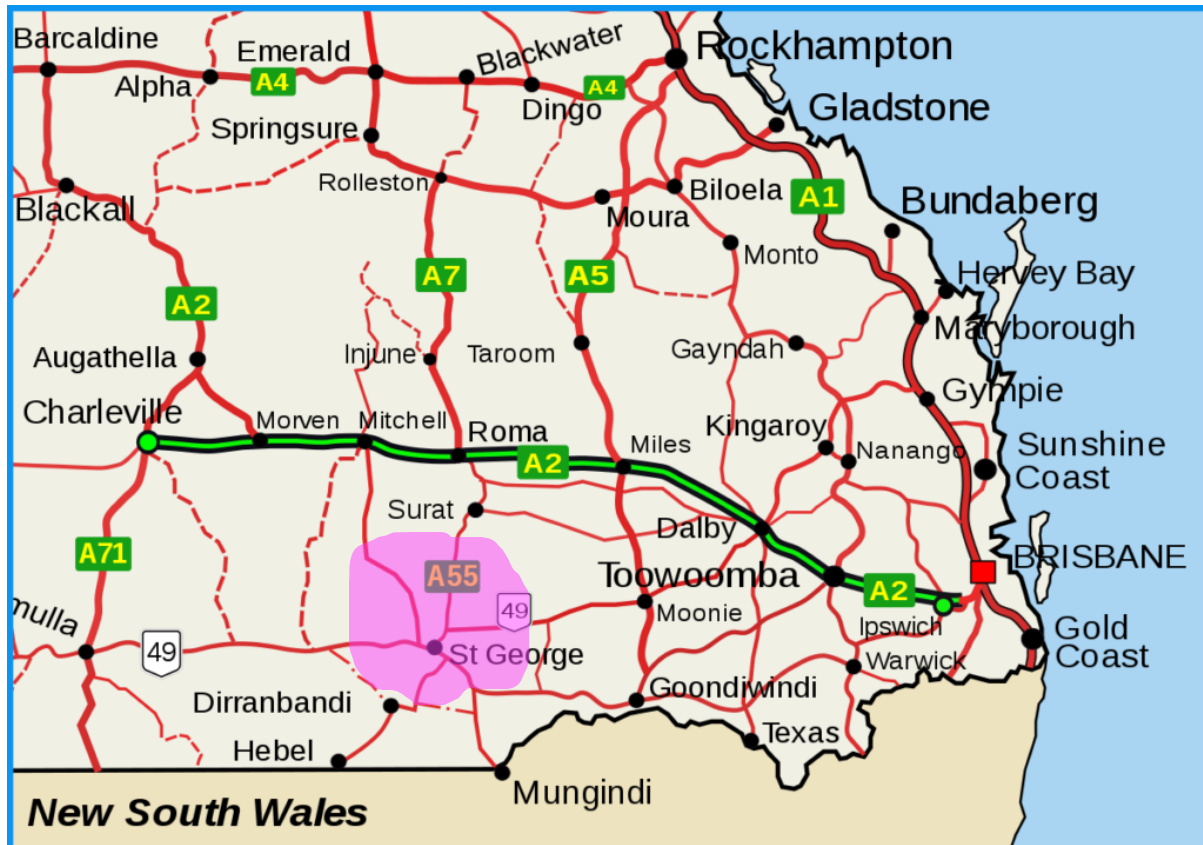


Christ Church, St George



Jacob's Well Op Shop.

Location



St George

Is a rural town located in the Balonne Shire of Queensland. The town is 513 kilometres west of Brisbane. In the 2021 census the population of St George was 3130 people. Sir Thomas Mitchell named the town. A plaque outside town explains: 'At this spot on St George's Day - April 23rd 1846 - Sir Thomas Mitchell crossed the Balonne and established a camp calling the crossing St Georges Bridge. This was the origin of the town St George.' St George has a rich cultural history- which includes being a meeting place for First Nations people over many, many years. St George has First Nations residents who identify as Mandandanji, Kooma, Kamilaroi and Bigambul.

The town has 3 cafes, a post office, 4 hairdressers, a visiting barber, clothing shops, and an extensive electrical shop. The local craftspeople support the "handmade shop". The town is beautiful in Spring and Summer with the streets lined with bauhinia and jacaranda trees. Along the Moonie Highway in a good season, you will see an abundance of wildflowers.



Jack Taylor Weir at St George

St George is proud of the links both past and present to the Balonne River. St George is Queensland's inland fishing capital. This river is reputedly an excellent fishing site for Yellowbelly and Murray Cod. The Jack Taylor weir provides the township with water. The weir provides recreation including Sandy Town river cruises, water skiing, kayaking and occasionally you will hear the dragon boat- particularly in September during the river festival. The river is used to supply the surrounding agricultural businesses, including horticulture and grazing. Crops grown in the St George region include cotton, wheat, oats, sorghum, chick peas, onions, garlic, corn, grapes and carrots.

The Andrew Nixon Bridge crosses the Balonne river and links St George to the townships north and west -Bollon, Cunnamulla, Begonia, Mitchell to name a few.

Floods

At times St George has been severely affected by floods. Most recent floods have occurred in 2010, 2011 and 2012 with the river height reaching 13.85 metres.



Demographics & Climate

The agricultural sector has sought the employment of backpackers from many countries including Samoa, Vanuatu, and New Zealand. We welcome many nationalities in St George.

St George is an Ecumenical community with 7 Church groups. The Lutheran congregation hold a service within the Anglican Church every second Sunday. St George, experiences a semi- arid climate with very hot summers; it is warm to hot in Spring and Autumn. The mild winters are glorious with some light frosts. Precipitation is moderately low throughout the year.



Facilities

St George has a General hospital with very experienced doctors – nine at the last count. St George has two medical centres; Goondir Medical Centre and the St George Medical centre. Visiting specialists service both centres. St George has an aged care facility – Warrawee. The visitor information centre is a popular tourist destination for travellers in winter. The recent development of the HUB - the Country University Centre (CUC) - provides



access for University students to study externally online. The library and the cultural centre have had recent upgrades and refurbishment. St George boasts a beautiful swimming pool with a recent addition of a hot artesian pool. The showgrounds are home to the Annual St George show, the camp-draft, and cutting events. The Jockey club has a yearly horse racing event and polocrosse is popular in St George, Dirranbandi and Bollon. The St George golf club has spectacular facilities and is home to the sand green championships. Other sporting facilities include lawn bowls, tennis, squash and two gyms. Rowden park is home to the St George Rugby League Club and the Rugby Union club. There is a Gun club and pistol club. Ballet for the younger students is held in the Anglican Church Hall. There is an Art group and a creative Arts group that have regular meetings and tutoring available. The Country Women's Association is very strong with their own rooms used for accommodation, meetings and markets.

The town also has an airport with a twice weekly services to Brisbane, Toowoomba, Cunnamulla and Thargomindah. The town is serviced by a regular bus transportation service to Toowoomba and courier services.

Education

St George has 3 schools. The St George State School (Prep- Year 6), The St George State High School (Year 7-12) and St Patrick's Catholic school (Prep-Year6). All schools have experienced teachers and state of the art facilities. The High school works in close partnership with the Balonne Shire Council and recently has new infrastructure to encourage students in the Agriculture sector.

Things to See and Do

St George Heritage Trail

There is a very comprehensive *Heritage Trail* brochure which can be downloaded at <https://www.balonne.qld.gov.au/downloads/file/493/st-george-heritage-trail>. It lists a total of 31 places of historic interest around the town of which the following are of particular interest. Theses include:

St George Pilots Memorial

Located along the riverbank of the Balonne. St George Pilots Memorial remembers two local pilots who flew in World War II. Warrant Officer Leonard Waters, the only known Aboriginal Fighter pilot to serve in World War II who flew a plane called "Black Magic". Squadron Leader John Jackson flew at Port Moresby and was killed there in 1942. He was one of those instrumental in preventing the Japanese advance on Port Moresby.

Mitchell's Cairn

On the 12th of April 1846, Sir Thomas Mitchell reached the spot on the Balonne River which he named St George's Bridge. There is a cairn and plaque, located on the western side of the Balonne river, which was erected by the Balonne Shire Council. It reads: "At this spot on St Georges Day - April 23 1846 - Sir Thomas Mitchell crossed the Balonne and established a camp calling the crossing St Georges Bridge. This was the origin of the town St George."

Old Gaol & Police Station

These two buildings were built in 1892; the building to the left is the gaol while the building to the right was the St George Police Station, which is currently used as the Heritage Museum. These buildings were relocated in 1989 so the new police station could be constructed. The Heritage Museum also has a blacksmithing shop, a printing press, local Aboriginal artefacts, an extensive harness collection, and a steam engine in working condition. The complex is located at the western end of Victoria Street. It is staffed by volunteers. Check with the Visitor Information Centre for opening times.

The Cobb & Co Hotel

Located on the corner of Henry Street and Victoria Street, the Cobb & Co Hotel was licenced to John Roberts in 1886, and was previously the booking office for the Mungindi Coach. It was renovated from 1914 to 1919, and once advertised electric light, aerated waters, cordial, as well as a select brand of wine and spirits.

Butchery / Cobb & Co Station

Located on the corner of Henry Street and Victoria Street, these two low lying buildings were the original Cobb & Co changeover station for St George. The last Cobb and Co Coach left from this site in 1923, heading for Surat.

The Unique Egg

Located at 108 Victoria Street, the Unique Egg houses is an unusual collection of beautifully hand-carved emu eggs. The eggs were designed by Steve Margaritis over a period of more than 60 years, they have been displayed at World Expos but are on permanent display in the store, which is open 9.00 am to 4.00 pm on weekdays and from 9.00 am to midday on Saturdays.

Riverbank Walkway

Stretching for approximately 3 km from the Jack Taylor Weir to the Hospital, this is a delightful walk beside the Balonne River.

Other Attractions

Exploring the local Cotton industry

The Balonne Shire Visitor Information Centre brochure guides visitors to suitable places where they can learn about the scale and complexity of the local cotton industry. There is an organised tour - *St George Cotton Farm & Vineyard Tour* - which can be booked at either the Visitor Information Centre or from Riverlands Vineyard.

Other sites worth a visit include; Beardmore Dam & Lake Kajarable. Aboriginal Rock Wells and the Weengallon Aboriginal Rock Wells.

The Nindigully Hotel South East of St George is a popular tourist destination with local entertainment throughout the year. The Riversands winery- has award winning wines made from locally grown grapes and provides a beautiful spot to enjoy a small meal from the menu. Thallon Grain Silos -A Beautiful image painted is on the Silos, titled the Watering hole.

Dirranbandi

Is situated 95 km south West of St George. It is a rural township. In the 2021 census there were 610 people. Hebel is 66 km South of Dirranbandi and is fast becoming a tourist attraction with the Hebel store and Hotel under new management. Cubby Station is one of the main employment businesses, one of the largest cotton growing properties in the Southern hemisphere.

Some First Nations people in Dirranbandi identify as Gamilaraay people (also known as Gamilaroi, Kamilaroi, Comilroy) The Gamilaraay language region includes the landscape within the local government boundaries of the Balonne Shire Council and includes the townships of Dirranbandi, Thallon, Talwood, Bungunya and Mungindi and extends to small townships in NSW

Other First Nation people identify as Yuwaalaraay people also known as *Yuwalyai, Euahlayi, Yuwaaliyaay, Gamilaraay, Kamilaroi, Yuwaaliyaayi*) is an Australian Aboriginal Language and is spoken on Yuwaalaraay country. The Yuwaalaraay language region includes the landscape within the local government boundaries of the Balonne Shire the townships of Dirranbandi as well as the border town of Hebel and extends to Walgett and Collarenebri in NSW.

The town reserve was surveyed in March 1885 by surveyor Claudius Buchanan Whish. He is believed to have named the town using an Aboriginal word, meaning either *broken forest country* or *chorus of frogs at night*. The name may be derived from a Yuwaaliyaay placename, *Dhurrunbandaay*, relating to *dhurrun.gal* ("hairy caterpillars") and *baanda-y* ("move in single file").

The town is serviced by a Hospital and a Prep to Year 10 School. The Balonne Shire Council have upgraded the railway precinct- the Rural Transaction Centre and there is an outreach of the CUC. This center offers a wonderful community place with a Library. Golf is popular in Dirranbandi.

St Marks Anglican Church currently offers a service once a month. It has an Op Shop next door.



St Mark's Anglican Church Dirranbandi

Dirranbandi also has the St Therese's Catholic Church, Uniting Church and the Riverlife Church.

Dirranbandi had the honour of being the destination for the last mail train to operate in Australia. The Thallon-to-Dirranbandi section of the line was closed on 2 September 2010.

The Culgoa Floodplain National Park lies 130 kilometres to the south-west.



Statue of runner Tom Dancey, Railway Street Park (2021).

Tom Dancey (1888–1957), a local stockman and Indigenous Australian, won Australia's most famous footrace, the Stawell Gift in 1910.

The Dirranbandi Dandy.

Bollon



St Mary's Church, Bollon

Bollon is a rural town in the Balonne Shire in the 2016 Census the population was 221 people. Bollon is situated approximately 114 km west of St George along the Wallum Creek a beautiful camping spot and home to Koalas. The town is thought to be named after the Mandandanji language word *balun* or *balonn* meaning *water* or *a running stream*.

Bollon has a primary School (Prep- 6), a café and a hotel under new management. The post office services as a tourist information centre. The Civic centre has a Library. Bollon offers medical and ambulance facilities. The Nullawokka Gallery also has a terrific tour and information session on First Nations History of the area. The Heritage Centre is also worth a visit.

Thallon

Is a small rural township 78 km south of St George. In the 2026 census Thallon had 231 people. The town is situated on the Canarvon Highway linking St George to the border town of Mungindi. The Moonie river runs adjacent to the town. Thallon has a Primary School (Prep-6), a post office, hotel, community hall, tennis courts, showground, park, and sportsground. Tourist attractions are 'William' the hairy nose wombat and the Thallon Grain Silos. The Progress Association is very strong and holds regular community events. Bullamon Homestead by the Moonie River is a heritage listed building.



St Anne's Anglican Church, Thallon

St Anne's Anglican Church currently had an ecumenical service supported by the Catholic Church.



William the Wombat is one Australia's 'big' things. The hairy nosed wombat once inhabited the Thallon area and is a critically endangered species. There is now a small number of wombats at the Richard Underwood nature refuge between St George and Surat.

For further Information on the position of Priest for the Anglican Parish of St George with Dirranbandi, please contact our regional bishop, Bishop Cam Venables:

- Email: cvenables@anglicanchurchsq.org.au
- Mobile: 0419 784 456
- Facebook: Cam Venables