



Miles Historical Village streetscape
Photo: Miles Historical Village



Condamine Bell Collection sample
Photo: Claire Croft



From the Norman Donpon Lapidary Display
Photo: Miles Historical Village

Miles Historical Village and Museum

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Presented by Museum & Gallery Services Queensland in partnership with the Miles Historical Village and Museum.

'Did You Know' – intriguing facts about the Museum and its collection

- The name of the Miles Historical Village & Museum main street, 'Dogwood Crossing', was the original name of the town of Miles until 1878 when the Railway went through. At this time it was renamed to 'Miles' as a mark of respect to Sir William Miles, the owner of the famous Dulacca Station. He was elected to State Parliament in 1865 and took an exhibition of Queensland, and the Murilla Shire, to Philadelphia in 1876.
- The Village's Norman Donpon Lapidary Display is a significant collection of over 4000 fossil woods, ferns, agates, crystals and minerals from around the world. Norman's life long passion for lapidary (defined as pertaining to gems and precious stones, or the art of working them) and a desire to share his collection with people has enabled the Village to house this outstanding collection. The collection attracts palaeobotanists, geologists and lapidary enthusiasts.
- The Condamine Bell Collection features the most successful and popular bell first made in Condamine (a small town just south of Miles) by Mr 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'. Designed to be hung from the necks of working bullocks, the bells ensured the stockmen were able to locate their cattle when left to roam and graze. Stockmen were even able to determine the distance of a bullock by the sound of its bell. It was claimed that these bells could be heard up to seven miles away.

Our Profile

The Miles Historical Village was officially opened in 1971, and over the years has developed into one of the premier tourist attractions within the region: a place for connecting to memories of a disappearing country lifestyle. There are currently over 35 buildings in a streetscape with amazing collections and links to a bygone era...if you remember it, we have it! Featured original buildings include the Hippong slab hut homestead from just north of Miles, a property whose name is derived from an early Chinese shepherd, Hip Pong, and the Columboola Hall, Dalwogan Railway Siding, Andersen's Smithy, Jimbour CWA, Village School, Dairy, Gaol, Dulacca Presbyterian Church and the Australian Bank of Commerce. Recreated buildings in the streetscape include The Red Rose Café, a replica of the first Greek café built in Miles in 1925, the boot maker, union hotel, hospital, butcher, barber shop, laundry, garage, post office, bakery and printery – The Murilla Express.

Other significant collections displayed include:

- The War Museum: a tribute to Australian service men and women from the Boer War to Vietnam displaying photographs, documents, uniforms and life size models.
- The Morgan Shell collection: one of the largest collections of shells in a regional museum in Australia, presented by Mr & Mrs G Morgan, former Miles residents.

Visitors are welcome at Miles Historical Village every day except Christmas Day. Come along and explore a slice of history in this unique setting! **Miles Historical Village: Creating Visions of Our Past for Future Generations!**

What the Standards Program has meant for our Museum

Greater Understanding

We now have a much clearer picture in terms of how we perceive our extensive Museum and its Collections. We now realise that our streetscape style is extensive and significant, as well as the specific collections (Lapidary, War Museum, Shell, Condamine Bell etc). This will in turn assist us with significance, interpretation and marketing.

Interpretation

We identified through the Standards Process that interpretation was of a high priority. We aim to continue development and progress in this area as we know this will help with the visitor's experience and, as word of mouth is one of our major marketing strategies, experiences and interactions mean a great deal.