

# Maryborough rolls out the welcome mat for RVs

*Free and low-cost parking opened for s/c units in a colourful, quirky, friendly city at the crossroads of south-east Queensland*



*Alan and June Brown car park in the CBD has free 48-hour parking for s/c RVs.*

News travels fast on the RV networks. Maryborough is still putting the finishing touches to its free and low-cost parking for self-contained RVs but the travellers are already starting to wander in – and January is the slow season in the industry in Queensland.

After a concerted campaign led by ardent community campaigner Nan Ott and her husband Al, the council narrowly voted last year to open a further 18 CBD sites in Alan and June Brown Car Park, allowing free 48-hour parking for 22 small to medium self-contained vehicles.

Another 50 sites suitable for big rigs will be at the Maryborough Airport, managed by the Doon Villa Soccer Club. The airport sites will be \$10 a night for a maximum of seven nights, with access to the club ablutions block.

**The presence of Australia's first RV Homebase and a proud legacy of trade skills with the ability to service, repair and modify all RVs has given Maryborough the attributes needed to label itself the RV CAPITAL OF AUSTRALIA.**

Councillors Paul Truscott and Anne Maddern helped persuade a majority of councillors to open up Maryborough to RVs, recognising how changing technology had designed motor homes and caravans to be independent.

A new breed of traveller has been created, gravitating to and supporting towns that provide free or low-cost parking sites where they can stay in freedom and independence.



*Mary Poppins perches beneath the window of the room in the 1880s bank building where her creator was born.*



*A striking memorial to Gallipoli and the Western Front has been designed to complement the statue of Duncan Chapman, the Maryborough man who was the first ashore at Gallipoli.*

Maryborough residents who have travelled the RV road and understand the economic impact of the new market have been pushing for 10 years to have the city – which ticks all the boxes for RVs – opened up to the new tourism industry.



*Guns installed in historic Queen's Park guard the Mary River.*

The city is planning to roll out the welcome mat in style, with the Doon Villa club preparing a herb garden for its guests and the campaign committee organising greeters to help travellers with advice on service, events and attractions in the quaint city.

Nan Ott said the campaigners were hoping for a flood of RVs coming in to support and explore the town.

“We have all been out there on the road and know what travellers are looking for and we reckon Maryborough has it all. We want to become the RV Capital of Australia so we are hoping the RV community will show doubters how much they can enrich a city.

“Our citizens will certainly be doing all they can to make their visitors as interesting, comfortable and friendly as possible.”

Maryborough’s list of attractions is endless and constantly evolving as its popularity grows as a quirky tourist destination. Torrid, funny, bleak, ghostly and charming stories are told in the old port city that is reckoned to be the most haunted in Australia.



*The Maryborough Military Museum in historic Wharf Street is rated the best in Australia after the Canberra War Museum.*



*LEFT: Mary Heritage and the Town Crier sample Maryborough’s speciality dish Mary Macon (lamb bacon) at the Maryborough Markets. Maryborough is also the home of Lychee Divine wares and macadamia nut products abound, celebrating the nearby township of Bauple as the home of the delicacy. Bauple (or bopple) nuts were found here and renamed macadamia for marketing reasons that mystify locals who still called them Bauple/bopple nuts. The street markets are held every Thursday morning and end with the colourful firing of the historic (and loud) time cannon.*





*A group of visitors gather at the City Hall for the 9am daily free guided walk of the colourful CBD.*

The city is compact and easy to stroll around soaking up atmosphere. It has more than 20 coffee shops, half a dozen bakeries, whimsical boutiques, artisan wares at the Engineers Arms Marketplace, street markets on Thursdays, rides on a quaint working replica of the first steam engine built in Queensland and a nostalgia shop frozen in time.

Costumed characters appear around the streets as Mary Heritage and the Town Crier and visitors can delve back into time with Tipples and Tales entertainment at the Bond Store, Maryborough by Night walking tours, intriguing stories and ghostly experiences.

A military memorial of national significance is planned around the statue of Duncan Chapman, the Maryborough man who was the first Anzac to step ashore at Gallipoli, not far from the site of the finest military museum outside Canberra.

The Wharf Street precinct is a photographer's delight and Mary Poppins figures high in the Maryborough stakes. The statue of the world's most famous nanny perches outside the colonial bank building where her creator, Pamela Lyndon Travers, was born in 1889. A museum is being created in the old bank.

A unique peal bells in a tower beside the grand St Paul's Church precinct is dedicated to a remarkable woman, a former convict of noble character who became a compassionate matriarch of a pioneering family.



*Little statues of goats and pigs illustrate the tale of the Inspector of Nuisances.*

Expected to be highly popular with RV travellers will be the city's modern Brolga Theatre, an easy-to-access riverside complex with a quality program of national and international acts.

A new story trail winding through city streets, with automated story tellers and small bronze statues, takes visitors back in time to when Maryborough grew from a rough river port to a wealthy industrialised regional city.



*Visitors are intrigued to listen to a tale from one of the automated boxes on the story trail. Escorted walking night tours are now popular.*



*The Tippler was tasked with tasting liquor imports at the Bond Store to test the alcohol levels. Does he get tipsy? Tipples and Tales is a new event at Maryborough's Bond Store in historic Wharf Street followed by a Maryborough by Night walking tour around the animated story trail, where hilarious and haunting tales abound and Mary Poppins flies over rooftops.*



*The unique Mary Ann with the vertical boiler was built in Maryborough in 1983, the first steam train built in Queensland. It was faithfully recreated by a team led by passionate engineer Peter Olds and now runs through Queen's Park on market days and on the last Sunday or the month. In busy times it carries about 800 people a day along a picturesque riverside route.*

Weekly, monthly and annual events are held in the city, with many free community gatherings in scenic spots. Picturesque Queen's Park overlooking the Mary River is a popular venue for socialising and strolling, with treasures from the past dotted around its rolling tracts. Once a month the park whistles the tune of ingenious working scale models of steam trains, taking young and old on trips on the tiny railway lines while the band plays in the rotunda. Free monthly concerts are held on Saturday nights in Gataker's Artspace and on Sundays at the open air riverside stage at the Brolga theatre.

On the outskirts of Maryborough are curiosity coffee shops, art-strewn or natural walks, exercise stations on the Ululah Lagoon walk around the golf course and a wildlife animal sanctuary where Australian and international visitors delight in the close-up and personal experience with native fauna.



*Little scale model trains run in Queen's Park as the band plays on the last Sunday of the month*

## ***A fine centre for exploration***

Maryborough is perched beside the Bruce Highway three hours north of Brisbane at the crossroads of Queensland and in the centre of the Fraser Coast Region "Where Nature Comes Alive". The Bruce takes travellers north and south and the Burnett and alternative routes to the inland are to the west.

To the east are day trips to Hervey Bay, Fraser Island, Burrum Heads, Lady Elliot Island, the Sandy Strait fishing villages, Tin Can Bay and Rainbow Beach. The countryside around Maryborough is dotted with heritage pubs and rustic havens and the colourful town of Childers is a short drive north along the highway.



# RV accommodation information



## Alan and June Brown car park

- 22 free 48-hour sites, s/c only, in CBD tree-lined site, most 3.2m x 7m with some 4m x 8m. Long vehicle day parking across the road.
- Within 100m: **Visitors Information Centre, City Hall and town green**; two welcoming bowls clubs; **modern swimming complex with 100m pool, 50m heated pool, therapeutic pool, ensuite toilets and showers**; supermarket; **markets (Thursdays)**.
- Within 300m: **Cafes, boutiques, whimsical retail**; acclaimed military museum and several other museums; **historical sites including unique peal of bells in picturesque church precinct**; two shopping centres; **statue of first man ashore at Gallipoli in heritage-listed Queen's Park**; statue of Mary Poppins outside heritage building where author was born; **Brolga Theatre**; Wharf Street precinct.

## Maryborough Airport

- 50 sites, \$10 a night up to seven nights, s/c only, suitable for big rigs.
- Managed by Doon Villa Soccer Club with access to modern showers and toilets.
- 2km from CBD, hourly bus service to Maryborough or Hervey Bay. Reasonable taxi rates.
- Charter flights and scenic flights of Sandy Straits and/or Fraser Island available at airport.
- Herb garden for guests.
- Dump point and water access (available all travellers).

## Longer stays

We are sure you will want to stay longer. Friendly Maryborough has the most equable climate in Australia and hundreds of nooks, heritage treasures, museums, beaches and lakes to explore. Daily, weekly and monthly events are fun and free (or cheap). Entertainment abounds. A number of options are available for longer stays at a variety private parks, some in spacious, relaxed grounds that aim at providing a low-cost RV experience with happy hour.