

York & Surrounding Districts

SCENIC SELF-DRIVE TOUR

Tour No. 8



Kokerbin Rock

Third Largest Monolith in Australia



Option 1 236 km. – Kokerbin Rock and retrace route back to York.

Option 2 263 km. – Kokerbin Rock, Mt. Stirling, Cunderdin Museum, return to York via Meckering.



For further information on this or other self drive tours please contact
York Information Services
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9641 1301

BE PART OF “HISTORY STILL IN THE MAKING”

Commence at the York town Hall (1911) in Avon Terrace.

Parking and Toilets are available here.

Set your odometer at 0 and head south to crossroads where you turn left into Balladong Road.

As you **turn left**, look to your right and see the site of the district's first church, mentioned again shortly. *This is a very interesting and lovely shade area and well worth a look if time permits. Barlardong was the name of the Aboriginal group that lived here before white men came.*

Cross the Avon River then **turn right** at the T junction onto the Quairading Road (sealed).

At 2.5 km is your first Railway Crossing and at 3.3 km is Cold Harbour Bridge. The road is now passing through what was originally a large holding called "Cold Harbour". *It was farmed from 1842 by John and Stanley Parker who had come out with their family from England from Northbourne in Kent where their farm was called "Cold Harbour". The name had nothing to do with the sea but was a term used for an area protected from cold weather These two brothers were among those who initiated the building of the district's first church the site of which we passed earlier on the corner of Avon Terrace and Balladong Road.*

Curve left with the road passing Top Beverley Road on your right and on the left at 3.8 km are the extensive sheds of the Mackie Hay enterprise. *About 80,000 tonnes of hay, plus straw are prepared annually here, largely for export in containers.*

The larger trees you will see along the roadside are York Gums (*Eucalyptus loxophleba*) and the shrub/trees are Jams (*Acacia acuminata*), *so called because when sawn, the wood smells like raspberry jam. The wood is hard and durable and was used extensively for fence posts by the early settlers. Many of these posts are still in use today and could be 100 or more years old.*

At 6.9 km on the left is a farmlet with emus enclosed with a high fence. *Ripening crops you will see from October to January will be Wheat, Barley, Oats, Lupins or Canola. The white trunked gum trees are Wandoos (*Eucalyptus wandoo*)*

At 8.4 km is another railway crossing. This line goes right to Quairading and Bruce Rock and left back to York.

The tall trees with shiny leaves and umbrella shaped crowns are Salmon Gums (*Eucalyptus salmonophloia*) so called because around January to March their new bark is the orange/pinkish colour of salmon. *They grow on good quality farming land that was much sought after in the early days of settlement.*

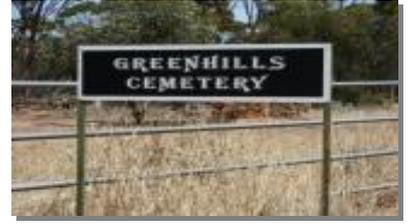
At 10.5 km on the left is Station Road and the Mt. Hardy Reserve. *In season from August to October there can be over 40 different wildflowers in this area of bush. The highest point of the Needling Hills (350 m high) is coming into view on the left. It is the next highest landmark in the Shire of York after Mt. Bakewell which is 417m high. (Any roads saying Needling Hills are disused).*

At 13.3 km the road passes through a long grove of she-oaks (*Casuarina obesa*). *These trees were used to make roof shingles on early buildings in the district.*

Continue over a railway crossing.

At 17.8 km and pass the road to Greenhills on the left. *This name comes from the aboriginal name for the area which sounded like Greenilling. Note that Aboriginal place names in these districts often end with 'ine', 'in' or 'ing' whereas down south the common ending is 'up'. These suffixes mean 'place of'.*

At 24 km Note the small cemetery on the right. *The first Greenhills church, with a thatched roof, was built here – only the floor plan remains.*



At 24.2 km also on the right is the jarrah oiled-weatherboard Anglican Church of St. Andrews (1912) and in this patch of bush is the old school site 1896-1910. As you pass the crossroads of Penny Drive on left and Greenhills Rd on right, look right and see the pile of brick/stone rubble in the corner of the paddock which is all that remains of the first Agricultural Hall to be built in Western Australia in approx 1895. *Imagine the vital decisions made on this site by the ghosts of the past.*

At 25.1 km on the left is the old KORRAWILLA homestead of the Penny family 1865 (Heritage listed) with stables and farm sheds, and further into the property a modern brick house. *This was one of the first farms to be taken up east of York. Two generations of the Penny family still farm here. The first post office in the district was run from the homestead 1867.* This is now private property.

On the right, all lonely in the paddock, stands the ruin of a stone kitchen – all that remains of a house built by Henry Penny in 1890 for his son when he married.

At 26.4 km yet another railway crossing and **at 27.8 km** you arrive at “THE-TOWN-THAT-NEVER-WAS” – KAURING (or Cowering – aboriginal for place of parrots). *The townsite was marked out in little blocks in an early survey, but the town never happened! In the late 1980's someone discovered a map with little blocks shown, bought the whole lot and proceeded to sell them off individually.*

Delictable Gourmet café at Kauring offers a wonderful variety of cheeses, edible goodies and superb takeaway picnic meals. Toilets are available here for customers.

At 28.8 km pass Cubbine Road on the left. **At 35.8 km** cross the railway line yet again.

At 36.9 km enter the Beverley Shire.

At around 40 km on left see Mawson radio mast on the horizon and **at 43.5 km** the old town site renamed in 1912 to commemorate the famous Antarctic explorer Sir Douglas Mawson. **At 43.7 km** on the left note one of the amusing metal sculptures depicting the Wesley Wheat family doing rural things – they are Wesley Wheat, Basil Barley, Ollie Oats and Lucy Lupin. Keep a look out for them as there are about 20 of these larger-than-life sculptures scattered throughout the Shire of Quairading which you now enter **at 45.km**. *The town is named after an aboriginal word meaning place of the kwirra – the small bush kangaroo.*

Pass Jacob's Well Rd on right and **at 46.7 km** cross the railway line for the sixth time. Pass a couple more of the Wesley Wheat family.

At 60.6 km turn left into Parker Road to visit the ghost town of Dangin. One of the Wheat family is on your left pumping petrol.

Dangin is the aboriginal name for the needle bush which grows in the area. This was once a thriving rural town that grew up on the Parker farm with a Bank, Methodist Church, Temperance Hotel, General Store and more. There are historical markers around the town with photos of the major buildings on the sites where they once stood. Some are lived in today and are



therefore private property and not available to the public. The district, opened up by the Parker Family of Northbourne (mentioned earlier on this trip), has been farmed since the 1850's. Wagons loaded with sandalwood and other produce bound for Perth took two weeks for the round trip, returning filled with stores. The Parker families were big farmers of the district and many ghosts must abide here still. One year they hired a whole train and numerous stock wagons to take their lambs down to the Perth market. The Parkers were staunch Methodists and therefore there was no alcohol in the town. However there came a time when others wanted a licensed hotel, so one was built 7 km away outside the boundary of the Parker farm in 1907. This later grew into the town of Quairading. Soon commerce and people shifted to the town with the social centre of a local pub and Dangin gradually became the ghost town you see today.

It is great to see some people still living there keeping alive the memory of the town. Take some time to appreciate all of the buildings that once were here.

At approx 61.4 km after a circuit of Dangin return back to the Quairading Road, **turn left** heading east.

At 65 km Quairading Nature Reserve starts on the left with an official entry at **66.1 km**. *Walk trails have been marked in the 527 ha Reserve, wildflowers will be flowering in August - October with occasional sightings of kangaroos, echidnas and other native animals.*

Notice another one of the Wheat Family in the parking bay on the right.

At 67.8 km arrive at Quairading. *Light refreshments and toilets are available at the Roadhouse - the last toilets before Kokerbin rock at 148 km.*

Turn your odometer to **0** here

At about 11.2 km the road crosses a lake. At certain times of the year, the left side of the lake is quite pink, while the right side remains blue. *With evaporation, salt builds up on the fence posts and dead tree trunks and creates an unusual effect. When the water returns, the salt causes the pink colour.*



At 19.8 km Yoting Wheat bin is in the paddock on the right.

At 26.6 km on the left just off the road is the Ghost Town of Pantapin with the very old sugar gums (*Euc.cladocalyx*) lining the “main street”.

At 28.9 km enter the Bruce Rock Shire. **At 30.9 km** pass Hughes Road on right. Low shrubs called tamma (*Allocasuarina campestris*) indicate good wheat growing country.

At 32.3 km Olive green shrubs/trees on the right are quandongs – a hemi-parasite bearing red fruit around September. *The fruit is high in Vitamin C and was harvested by the indigenous people. It also made good jam, chutney and stewed fruit to supplement diets of the early settlers.*

At 35.2 km curve left and pass Shepherd Road on the right.

At 36.5 km turn left into Kokerbin Hill Road (unsealed) then go left onto sealed road at a T junction (unsigned) Pass Coarinvale Farm on right and Hadlow Road on the left **at 39.3 km**. Veer right and the road becomes Kwolyin West Road, continue north. You can now see the Rock on your left.

At 44.5 km Crossroads turn left into O’Grady Road then **at 45.1 km** turn left into Kokerbin Rock reserve (Kokerbin means high or lofty place in aboriginal language). There are basic toilets, BBQs and Information Board.

*Park here and explore walk trails. Find the cave and mini wave rock. If you can find Dog Rock (signposted) send us a photo because we could not find it! See great piled rock formations. Back at the BBQ area and in the car again, follow the unsealed entry track round the base of the Rock. Vegetation consists of straggly sandalwood trees (*Santalum spicatum*) with olive green leaves, casuarina species, tea tree (*Leptospermum species*), yellow everlastings etc.*



At a now closed road leading uphill to the right you can WALK up onto the Rock. On the rock there are painted arrows showing a walking route to the top. This is a relatively easy climb from here to view 360 degree panoramic vistas. Take care as the rock may be slippery in the wet weather. There is typical granite outcrop vegetation of the low prickly Borya, *Kunzea baxterii* (shrub with red flowers in November), teatree etc. You can explore a wooded gully and interesting piled rock formations to the west.

Walk back to your car on circular one way route and continue on.

At 47.6 km following the signs, explore the beautifully made rock well.

At 48 km Leave the Kokerbin Rock Reserve arriving back at O’Grady Road.



OPTIONS:1. You can retrace your route back to York. (Total trip approx 226 km)

OR 2.Travel across country, visiting Mt. Stirling on the way to Cunderdin to see the Golden Pipe Line Museum in the old Pumping Station (opening hours 10 – 4 daily, phone 9635 1291 to check) returning to York along the Great Eastern Highway and back roads. (Total trip approx 263 km)

FOR OPTION 2 Set odometer to 0

Turn left into O’Grady’s Road and **at approx 2.6 km** come to crossroads at Pantapin North Road – continue straight ahead and your road becomes Munyard Road. You are now back in the Quairading Shire. **At 7.2 km** Crossroads: Pantapin North West Road on left and Glen Luce Road on right, continue straight ahead.

At 11.4 km at T junction **turn right** (north) into Kellerberrin/Yoting Road (sealed).

At 13.4 km pass Kevills Lake Road on left. Mt. Stirling, with a splendid rock flank, can be seen to your right.

At 14.6 km **turn right** into Mt. Stirling Nature Reserve on unsealed track. There is a ruined church and the lonely grave of Lizzie Doig 1907. Tread gently if you climb the mountain as small native animals and wildflowers may be seen in season.

At 15.1km return to the Kellerberrin/Yoting Road (sealed) and **turn right** (north).

At 17 km enter Kellerberrin Shire. Cross mostly dry salt lakes.

At 23 km watch carefully for the sign Cubbine Road and **turn left** into this road which is unsealed. You are now in Shire of Tammin. Pass Moore Road on right, curve left then soon curve right, passing Finey Road on left **at 29.2 km**.

At 30.1km come to crossroads at Tammin South Road continue straight ahead on unsealed Cubbine Road.

At 34.2 km at T/Y Junction **turn right** (North) into Charles Gardner Reserve Road.

At 35.6 km curve left and Charles Gardner Reserve begins on the right. *This reserve is a very good sample of sand plain ecosystems with a profusion of wildflowers in season Aug – Oct.* Road verges have many Sand Plain Cypresses (*Actinostrobus arenarius*)

At 40.4 km come to odd shaped crossroads and cross Ralston Road (sealed) continuing on your road which now becomes Quartermaine Road (not apparently signed) and swings left.

At 48.5 km you will come to T junction. Left is Badjaling North Road, **turn right** (north) into Rabbit Proof Fence South Road (unsealed). On the left road verge see the distinctive sprawling grey leaved Rose of the West (*Eucalyptus macrocarpa*). Some of the old rabbit proof fence netting can be glimpsed on the right.

At 51.1 km on the left see the Twelve Mile gate in the old rabbit proof fence with the fine mesh wire (sometimes nearly covered with drifting sand). *These gates are so numbered to show the distance along the fence from the Cunderdin base camp to each gate i.e. 5 miles, 8 miles and 12 mile etc) This No 2 fence was surveyed in 1904 and erected to combat the advance of the rabbit scourge and rigorously patrolled for years. Three different fences were erected before the authorities gave up the unequal struggle to keep the rabbits at bay.*



At 54 km come to crossroads at Goldfields Road (sealed).

Here you could opt out by turning left and heading back to York on the sealed road – approx another 63km

OR

You could continue straight across on the unsealed road and on to Cunderdin. *Here you will need to allow yourself time to arrive a half to one hour before closing time as there is plenty to do and see at the Golden Pipeline Museum.*

Set odometer to 0

See on the left (the northwest corner) on the verge of the road is a small low marker stone. *It was put there in Australia's Bicentennial year on the York to Goldfields Road and placed on the actual line of the rabbit proof fence. The plaque states the construction date, length of the rabbit proof fence along with its start and finish points and information on where it joins up with the No 1 fence.*

At 3 km Pass Eight Mile Gate Road on left.

At 3.9 km Note a branch of the life-giving water pipeline on the left. *This pipeline is part of the most complex water scheme in the world. There are approx 278,501,000 litres in the pipe at any given time. 28,000,000,000 litres (28 giga litres) is taken from Mundaring storage in a year.* Tall grey-barked trees on left are morrel (Euc. longicornis), and some salmon gums with their distinctive shiny leaves.

At 7 km turn left onto Five Mile Gate Road (sealed). *In the early days of the rabbit proof fence, these roads led to closed gates in the Rabbit Proof Fence that had to be opened and then closed by anyone using the road.*

At 11.9 km desolate salt scald on the left and extensive tree planting on right.

At 14.5 km come to T junction at the Cunderdin/Quairading Road (sealed) turn right (north) for Cunderdin. Note the larger pipeline along the verge.

At 17.5 km arrive at the outskirts of Cunderdin.

At 19.4 km turn left into a road parallel with the Great Eastern Highway and come to the Golden Pipeline Museum in the old Pumping Station. *There are excellent historical displays and information about the Pipeline and an "earthquake house".*

Leave Cunderdin by the Great Eastern Highway with the main conduit of the Golden Pipeline and railway on your right. Pass through extensive degraded salt lake country on both sides of the road. *Some of the salt lakes have been there from time immemorial; some have been aggravated by unwise farming methods.*



At 43.5 km see the Camera Museum on the left as you come into Meckering. *It contains an amazing collection of historical photographic equipment. This is the only museum, totally dedicated to photography, open to the public anywhere in Western Australia. Meckering was the epicenter of the 1968 earthquake (6.9 on the Richter Scale) that obliterated most of the town – see markers where various buildings once stood. In the garden on the left there are dramatic photos and an amazing piece of twisted railway line that show the force of the quake. No lives were lost. This is well worth a look if you have a little time.*

The Meckering Roadhouse on the right has petrol and offers a variety of take away food and drinks.

Leave Meckering heading west and at 45 km turn left into Quellington Road (sealed) heading for YORK. Curve right with the bitumen passing where Moore Road (unsealed) goes off to the left, and continue to follow YORK signs.

At 54.9 km see the earthquake fault line site on the left. Mt.

Bakewell comes into view on the horizon and at 56.5 km you will enter the Shire of York.

At 59 km curve left into Mannavale Road and notice another branch of the extensive pipeline being visible on your right.

At 72.1 km come to a T junction at the Goldfields Road (sealed) where you turn right for York.

At 72.8 km see the little old Malebelling Hall on the right. *This was the scene for many happy community gatherings and church services in the early days of settlement.*

At 76.8 km salt scald on both sides of the road ringed with planted trees that seem to be containing the spread of the salt. To Yorkies (local folk), the sight of Mt. Bakewell clearly seen on the right, means we are nearly home.

At 83.6 km arrive at a T junction at the York/Northam Road (sealed) turn left for York (6 km).



As our comment on the first page states you are amongst

“History Still in the Making”

Save Our Trees – Please recycle this pamphlet