

York & Surrounding Districts

SCENIC SELF-DRIVE TOUR

HISTORIC CHURCHES AND GRAVEYARDS -YORK AND DISTRICT

Distance: approx 145 kilometres
Some gravel surfaces

Tour No. 11



For further information on this or other self drive tours
please contact

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www.york.wa.gov.au

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BE PART OF "HISTORY STILL IN THE MAKING"

Distance: approx 145 kilometers

Some Gravel surfaces

This tour takes you round the Churches, graveyards and district Halls where church services were once held in the York District.

A belief in God was very important in the lives of our pioneers. Services were first held in private homes, with churches soon erected in main centres, then in the Community Halls bravely built around the district. After harvest they followed the English tradition of a thanksgiving Harvest Festival with grain, hay, fruits, and other produce brought to the Church. Another Church festival once common in the York district before seeding began was the 'Blessing of the Plough'. This ceremony is still held (2010) at the Beverley Parish Church of St. John's-in-the-Wilderness in The Dale. A tractor ceremonially pulls a single furrow plough and in the resultant furrow the congregation plant some grains and ask God's blessing on the coming growing season.

Heritage Christian churches within the town of York:

*Holy Trinity Church	(1853)	Suburban Road
*St. Patrick's	(1886)	South Street
*Uniting Church	(1854)	Corner of Grey Street and Centennial Drive

Other Christian places of worship (not in heritage buildings):

* Church of Christ	Corner Avon Terrace and Pool St.
* Salvation Army Citadel	Avon Terrace
* Main town cemetery	(1869-present day) Herbert Road.

Cemetery Walk Trail book available from York Information Services

You will see on this self drive tour:

•Anglican Church site and First Graveyard of York	(1840)
•Church and Graveyard at Gilgering	(1860)
•Church and Graveyard at Edwards' Crossing	(1862)
•Greenhills Cemetery and Church	(1912)
•Doodenanning Cemetery	(1897)
•Tipperary Church	(1892)

Additional literature suggestion- "Wildflowers of the Shire of York" is available from York Information Services and is a useful brochure to have with you during wildflower season, late Aug-Oct.

Commence in Avon Terrace at York Town Hall. Parking and toilets are available here.

Set odometer at 0 and head south in Avon Terrace.

0.2 km crossroads where the Great Southern Highway comes in on your right and swings round to head south. Cross over and see on your left the park on the corner. *This is the site of the first Anglican Church and graveyard in York (1840). In 1861 it was rebuilt in brick and later in 1905 it was moved brick by brick to be rebuilt as the Parish Hall beside Holy Trinity Church on the other side of the Avon River on the corner of Newcastle and Pool Streets. This graveyard was the last resting place of many early settlers. After the making of Balladong Street, some of the headstones have been gathered into the shape of the old Church and a large cross marks the place of the altar.*

At 0.7 km you are passing through Blandstown, the earliest part of settlement in York from 1831.

At 4 km on right pass tree-lined driveway leading to "Grassdale" homestead - 1909.

The hill on the left is Mt. Hardy.

At 5.7 km on the right is the marker sign for the Orchid

Conservation Reserve. *It is a long narrow reserve which runs till about 6.4 km between the road and the railway line. In the Spring - late August to October - wildflowers, including various orchids, can be seen among the Jam trees (Acacia acuminata). These trees get their name because when freshly cut, the timber smells like raspberry jam. Please tread gently if you explore the reserve. Further in you can see the railway line and the water pipeline. The Pipeline is a feeder line off the main conduit to Kalgoorlie and carries water from Perth to Beverley. At 8.3 km* on the right is a quarry that produces high quality granite for monuments, now occupied by a local sculptor whose work is represented in international galleries. From here on until 9.2 km when you cross Cave Hill Bridge, keep a lookout to the right and you may see a ragged-shaped cave about half way up the escarpment wall. *In this cave there is a Nyungar drawing of a round object with lines across it like loosely woven string, a handprint and a jagged hole in the roof of the cave. Legend has it that in the Dreamtime the moon was a man on the earth and some warriors chased him into this cave. He got tired of being confined there so he put his hand on the cave wall and using that leverage he burst out, making the jagged hole in the roof, and escaped up to the sky where he became the moon and roams around still. Access to the cave can only be arranged with the Nyungar custodian of the site.*

At 10.2 km on the left is Gwambygine Park. See the rammed earth entrance gateposts of the Alcoa million dollar Avon Ascent environmental project. *This could be worth a visit. Calculate your extra kilometres if driving in. There are toilets, BBQs and children's climbing equipment and a short heritage walk including the old school site, also a boardwalk to a gazebo lookout over the River where you might see long-necked tortoises.*



At 10.6 km pass Gwambygine East Road and river crossing.

At 11.2 km on left is the old Gwambygine Homestead (1836) one of the oldest colonial dwellings still standing. *It was once the property of Rev. J.B. Wittenoom the colonial Chaplain and later the Clifton Family. It is having some stabilising repairs done to it (2010).*

At 12.5 km Gwambygine Pool Conservation Reserve. *This spot was the swimming hole for generations of young Yorkies. However, due to a combination of factors, the river is silting up again even after many tonnes of silt were removed several years ago. So, much reclamation and revegetation work is still ongoing.*

At 14.1 km on left is the entrance to Lavendale Farm. *There are self-contained accommodation cottages providing their own water and using solar power, also farm animals and revegetation plantings.*

At 15.2 km cross Oakover River.

At 15.5km turn left onto the entrance track to the Anglican Church of **St. Peter's at Gilgering** and former School site. *The brick church was consecrated in 1860 and was originally the Parish Church for Beverley as it then stood within that shire's boundary. The graveyard is the final resting place of 31 members of the Fleay family who were early settlers of the area, also 10 from the Parker family and various other pioneers.*

At 16.1 km return to the Great Southern Highway where you turn right – as though heading back to York.

At 21 km turn right at Gwambygine East Road and cross the Avon River.

At 22.4 km On the left see the stately Salmon Gums (*Eucalyptus salmonophloia*). *These trees have a distinctive umbrella shaped canopy with shiny leaves. The trunks turn a beautiful salmon colour in the January to autumn season.* The frequently occurring rather straggly dark-trunked trees are York Gums (*Eucalyptus loxophleba*).

At 23.5 km arrive at crossroads at the Top Beverley Road (bitumen).

OPTION OF 27 km– round trip to the Church and Graveyard at Edwards' Crossing.

Set odometer to 0 and turn right.

At .9 km pass Thylungra Farm – once the homestead of descendants of the famous Durack family, the pioneers who overlanded cattle from their station – Thylungra – in Queensland to northern Western Australia. *Sadly there are no longer any Duracks left in the district.*

The road follows the rolling contours of the Avon Valley. Notice various belts of revegetation. Farmers realise the need to replant along the river tributaries to contain erosion. *The Avon region has been a reliable farming area since its discovery in 1831, growing crops of wheat, barley, oats and canola and providing grazing for cattle and sheep.*

At 7 km pass Yangedine with its early barn and farm buildings. *In 1839 Yangedine was purchased by Dr. S.W. Viveash and from 1841 monthly church services were held there.*

The white-trunked trees are Eucalyptus wandoo. Lots of the fence posts along the roadsides were cut from the very durable wood of the Jam trees and some still standing today could be over 100 years old.

At 13.5 km Arrive at Edward's Crossing – an early trading post was established here on the river before Beverley town came into being. Turn left to the Anglican Church of St. Paul. **It is important that you leave gates as you find them please.** *The stone Church was consecrated in 1862 and then became the Parish Church of Beverley for 30 years. Services are still held here at regular intervals. In this peaceful spot are the graves of early pioneers of the district such as Edwards, Barrett-Lennard, Broun, Blechynden and others.* Return to the Top Beverley Road, turn right and retrace your steps to Gwambygine East crossroads at 27.1 km.

Set odometer to 0 and turn right.

At 3.1 the road surface becomes gravel.

At 6.6 km on right pass "Seabourne" – still farmed by the Seabrook family after several generations.

At 7.6 km hills seen on far left horizon are the Needling Hills.

At 10.1 km at T junction turn right onto bitumen York Quairading Road. A branch of Piccadilly Road also comes in here.

At 11.8 km cross Mackie River *named after Magistrate W.H. Mackie who was an early Magistrate of the York District.*

At 13 km on left are more of the distinctive Salmon Gums. *These grow on good farming soil so this type of land was taken up early and cleared vigorously, sometimes leaving only roadside trees and the occasional tree in the paddock for shade.*



At 14.2 km on right is the **Greenhills Cemetery**. *Within the enclosure you can see the foundations – all that remains – of the tiny first church here. Graves of early settlers such as Boyle, Mills, Taylor etc lie peacefully here. Maintenance of the place is largely carried on by the current generation of the Penny family and restoration and marking and naming of old*

graves has been undertaken.

Continue on along the Quairading road.

At 14.5 km turn right into the grounds of **St. Andrew's Anglican Church**. *This weatherboard church, also cared for by the Penny family, and surrounded by natural bush, has stood here since 1912.*



Return to Quairading Road.

At 14.6 km arrive at crossroads. Turn left into Penny Drive to take you to Greenhills. Observe more lovely Salmon Gums on roadside.

At 17.7 km a left turn would take you into Greenhills past the Wheat Bin. The Tavern (1906) may be open. Continue straight on for the Churches and Graveyards Tour.

Turn odometer to 0

At 0.1 km cross railway line, pass weighbridge on left. Note the restored Old bakery with its Harper fencing ahead on left but follow right curve of Doodenanning Road.

At 3.3 km observe successful roadside revegetation planting on left. More white-trunked wandoo (Euc. wandoo) on roadside

At 3.7 km pass Corner Wells Road on right.

At 6.6 km Badgin Road comes in on left.

At 10.2 km road becomes gravel. Pass Quonamining road on left. Road has bitumen surface on curves.

At around 18.6 km see badly degraded land on both sides of road. Pass Gaults Road on right, Narraloggan Road on left then Whitewell Road (named Waghorn on old maps)

At 20 km road forks - take right fork for **Doodenanning Cemetery** -1897.

When you have visited the cemetery, return to road fork

At 20.8 km and turn right for the ghost town of Doodenanning (means “place of calm water” in the Nyungar language) crossing old bridge over the Mortlock River. *This historic rural town was founded in 1897 and was the centre for a thriving farming community. A 9-hole golf Course with sand greens, which is still in use today (2010), has been laid out among the marked sites of some of the original buildings e.g. the school 1907-1945. See the old hitching rail where the pupils tied up their horses, complete with nosebag of chaff, while they attended school. It is eerie walking there where so much activity must have gone on long ago. Visitors are welcome to play golf for a small green fee. The hall (1918) with four tennis courts, two of which can be used at night, has been well kept and maintained, and those still living in the district meet for tennis and BBQ teas in summer and play golf during winter. There is a map on the outside wall of the hall showing how the original town site was laid out. In the mid 1860's the notorious bushranger and prison escapee Moondyne Joe was recaptured in the Doodenanning area and was held briefly in the Old York Gaol from which he did not escape!*

Return your odometer to 0 and continue on gravel road to T junction (bitumen).

At 1 km the junction sign says Balkuling to right but you turn left.

At 4.8 km arrive at crossroads at Goldfields Road (bitumen) where you turn left.

At 8.9 km pass Moore Road to Meckering.

At 10.6 km narrow bridge, once more crossing the Mortlock River which eventually flows into the Avon River at Northam. Pass Warding Road on right, Quonamining Road on left, Wallaby Road on right and

At 18.3 km pass Badgin Road on left.

At 19 km notice a plantation of tagasaste planted for fodder on left.

At 20.3 km is the start of Wallaby Hills Nature Reserve.

At 21.3 km is a car entrance to this special reserve of pristine bush. *Wildflowers abound in the season – late August to October. Please keep to the track and NO FIRES HERE PLEASE. Most of the tall Grass Trees (Xanthorrhoea preissii) have never been burnt and are therefore very vulnerable to fire. These are amongst the tallest grass trees you may ever see with their ‘skirts’ extending right down to the ground.*

At 22.4 km Another tagasaste plantation on left and Mt. Bakewell appears on the far horizon at front left.

At 27 km on right pass Mannavale Road to Meckering.

At 27.3 km Malebelling School site (1907 –1938) on left. *There were once tennis courts and a cricket field here. Old photos show local cricketers who were chosen to play in Country Week cricket Matches.*



At 27.7 km on right is the **Malebelling Hall** (1908). *Church Services were held here when the priest visited the district by horse and trap. The hall was once the scene of many community events, including birthday parties, weddings and Christmas functions.*

At 28 km arrive at crossroads (Cameron to left) turn right into Sees Road. Notice a patch of Agave Cactus in the paddock on the right. *This usually indicates where a former home used to stand because the early settlers seemed to like growing this plant.*

At 31.2 km See more tagasaste on right and Wandoos on roadside then Salmon Gums. Notice Jam tree fence posts and some of the old rabbit proof netting on the fence on right.

At 34.3 km Lennards Road forks off to the left, continue curving right on Sees Road, heading north. Pass Bogling Road on right.

At around 35.3 km see revegetation on right. *These areas have been planted over several seasons for a local farmer by Kingsley Primary School to aid revegetation and to slow erosion and water-logging along an old watercourse.*

At 36.7 km on the left is the former Quellington School House designed by the government architect George Temple-Poole in 1885 and used as a school till 1944. *It is now beautifully restored and is a self-contained accommodation unit. The blackboard has been left in what is now the kitchen/living room and visitors can play at being school teachers. Temple-Poole designed Courthouses, gaols, Hospitals and other public buildings all round the state.*

Adjacent is a small paddock with alpacas. On right is Barwon Park Farm. *This property has been farmed by the Gentle family for six generations.*

At 37 km arrive at crossroads at Quellington Road (bitumen).

Set odometer to 0 and continue straight ahead.

At 2.2.km Arrive at the lovely **Quellington Hall** on the right just over the York Shire boundary. *This stone hall, built in 1896 in ecclesiastical style complete with “rose” window*

high up in the façade, was the community centre. Church services were held here, also many other diverse social activities such as dances, Christmas tree parties and Wedding receptions. The remains of Tennis courts, and a cricket pitch can still be seen in a paddock across the road and a community plunge sheep dip in the creek behind the Hall was an important part of rural activities.

Return back to the crossroads at 4.4 km and turn right into Quellington Road. A closer view of Mt. Bakewell is appearing on the horizon now.



At 7.8 km arrive at T junction of York–Northam Road (bitumen) turn left for York.

At 8 km on right is **Tipperary Church** (1892) which was built to service the religious needs of a small community centred on Tipperary Farm. It was damaged by the Meckering earthquake in 1968 and fell into disrepair.

The Church was restored as a private residence in 1978 –

1979 and B & B accommodation is now available in a separate building in the unique grounds that include an early surveyor’s marked tree (Enquiries 043 9965 275).

Please respect that this is private property.

At 9.9 km pass Lennard Road on left.

At 16.4 km pass Cowan road on right and Crawford Court on left and you are back in York Township.

At 17.5 km at crossroads turn right into Lincoln Street. Pass high-gabled shed on right where once the coaches of Cobb and Co stopped.

At 18.3 km see the red brick **Holy Trinity Church** (1853) with its adjoining Hall that used to be a church on the other side of the river. Next on the right is the Rectory (1875)

At 18.5 km turn right into Glebe Street, pass Tennis and Croquet clubs, cross the Avon River and so back into the heart of York. Turn left at crossroads and

At 19.2 km arrive back at the York Town Hall.

If you would like to inquire further about these churches, please contact the York Archives 9641 1765 on Wednesdays or post queries to P.O. Box 143, York, 6302.

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