



The Chinchilla Historical Museum  
Photo: Chinchilla Historical Museum



The Chinchilla Melon Festival  
Photo: Chinchilla Historical Museum



The Chinchilla Cockroach  
from *Going Bush with Chinchilla Nats*

**Chinchilla Historical Museum**  
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Hours: 9am-4pm daily  
except some Public holidays

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

- Chinchilla played an important role in the fight against the destructive prickly pear, an invasive weed that invaded Australia's eastern states, causing many farmers to abandon their properties. The town had one of the farms where the eggs from the cactoblastis moth were collected and packaged in cartons for distribution to landholders. Though not effective in all areas the moth is still regarded as one of the world's best examples of successful weed biological control. Located 10 kilometres east of Chinchilla, The Boonarga Cactoblastis Hall, which is listed on the Queensland Heritage Register, is said to be "the only building dedicated to an insect".
- Chinchilla has a variety of unique fossil woods, including the Chinchilla Red, coloured by red oxide in the soil and extremely hard. Pentoxylon, petrified Jurassic era vegetation (rather than petrified trees) is also thought to be unique to this area in Australia. The Museum's display, 'Beneath Chinchilla's Soils', showcases samples of these unique natural wonders.
- Chinchilla has its own wattle and cockroach. Visitors can see the Chinchilla cockroach in the museum's Field Naturalists Display.

### Our Profile

Chinchilla Historical Museum is dedicated to the natural resources of the Chinchilla area and the history of their use. It offers a glimpse into farming and local industry with key displays including: the 'Cypress Pine Centre', which tells the story of the saw milling industry that established the town of Chinchilla (it is believed that the town name comes from the Aboriginal word 'Jinchilla' which means Cyprus Pine); the 'Green Plague' exhibit, explaining the devastation caused by the Prickly Pear cactus and the development of the local cactoblastis moth breeding program; and, the Melon Festival display, celebrating Chinchilla as the 'melon capital' of Australia, and telling the story of this important industry and its contribution to the economic and tourist growth in the town.

The museum has strong social history collections and buildings on site include Chinchilla's very first homestead 'Wongongera Cottage' (built in 1880) and Goombi Hall. Once the hub of community life, the Hall captures the atmosphere of country social life: the dances, weddings, kitchen teas, balls, meetings and sporting events that were central to the cultural and social life of many small country towns.

The museum also interprets the area's natural history. Highlights include: living tree specimens, the Chinchilla White Gums; the Field Naturalists Display, of the indigenous botany and wildlife in the area; Beneath Chinchilla's Soils - an extensive display of petrified wood, some unique to the area, such as Chinchilla Red; and, the Jurassic Mural and Garden - developed in conjunction with local TAFE students.

### What the Standards Program has meant for our Museum

#### Organisational Structure

The Standards Program has emphasised the importance of policies, procedures and documentation. It has refocused our attention on the purpose of the Museum and has enabled us to identify the significant portions of our collection and the areas that require attention.

#### Significant Stories

We have gained a better understanding of our significant stories, particularly in relation to the natural resources collection.