

## What was the 'Rack railway' system?

There were eight rack engines in Mount Morgan and they operated for 54 years, from 1889 to 1952. There was only one other Rack railway system in Australia during that time at Mount Lyell railway in Tasmania.

The Abt rack locomotive was a powerful locomotive with adhesive wheels and an independently powered engine beneath the boiler which drove pinions (toothed wheels) set between the adhesive wheels. These pinions meshed with the teeth of a serrated or toothed rack-rail attached to the sleepers midway between the normal running rails. This gave the necessary 'thrust' or driving power to the rack engine.

The rack-rail consisted of two parallel serrated bars, about 2.5 inches apart and so arranged that the indentations on one bar were exactly opposite to the teeth on the other bar. There were two sets of pinions under the rack, arranged so that two pinions were always engaged with the teeth of the rack-rails at any time.



## MOUNT MORGAN Railway Museum

Light refreshments  
Local Arts, Crafts and Souvenirs on sale

Schools & Special Interest Groups  
Welcome By Appointment

### MT MORGAN RAILWAY MUSEUM & TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE

1 Railway Parade  
Mount Morgan

Open 9 am to 4 pm daily

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Discover the rail history of one  
of Central Queensland's oldest  
mining towns

*... preserving our heritage*



## An enduring legacy

**1867** The railway line to the west from Rockhampton to Westwood, through Kabra, was opened. Later, a railway line from Rockhampton to Mount Morgan became a necessity and a line was built from Kabra.

To reach Mount Morgan, the line had to climb the Razorback Range : 968 feet above sea level with a vertical rise of 376 feet. The line up the Razorback from Moonmera (at the bottom of the Range) to Moongan (at the top) was very steep with a gradient of 1:16.5, and the standard steam locomotive required assistance from an Abt rack engine to handle the train up and down the Razorback Range.

**1898** The Mount Morgan Railway Station building was completed and operated as a Station until 1987.

**1952** A new rail line around the mountainside, which could be operated by a standard locomotive engine, was opened to eliminate the rack section of the railway line. The continual connecting and disconnecting of the rack engine had considerably slowed down the service.

**1967** The Mount Morgan locomotive depot was closed down.

**1968** A direct line from Moura to Gladstone was built and coal-fired steam engines were gradually replaced by diesel-electric locomotives which were stationed, overhauled and maintained at the locomotive depot in Rockhampton.

**1974** The Mount Morgan Railway Station Building and the Railway Water Tank were "classified" by the National Trust of Queensland.

**1984** The Mount Morgan Railway Depot was downgraded to two employees: a stationmaster and a porter.

**1987** Rail services from Rockhampton to Mount Morgan finally closed down and the line was removed in 1989.



### Did you know?

Mount Morgan's biggest claim to fame is the Mount Morgan Mine, which was mined for 99 years.

The original piece of land was called 'Glen Gordon', and in its peak the town was home for up to 16 000 residents.

When the Mine closed in 1981 it had yielded a total of:

- 225,000kg of gold
- 50,000kg of silver
- 360,000 tonne of copper

What was once a large mountain is now one of the largest artificial holes on earth – more than 2.5km long and more than 300m deep!



### Explore

History so rich it takes your breath away is only a pleasant 38km from Rockhampton – at the Mount Morgan Railway Museum. The Mount Morgan Railway was completed in 1898 and the railway building in Railway Parade now houses the Mount Morgan Railway Museum and Tourist Information Centre.

### Discover

The Mount Morgan Railway Museum is a 'must do' on the Mount Morgan Golden List of things to do and see on the Mount. Step back in time and experience how life and travel used to be. Through audio-visual displays and 3D presentation, experience travel of the past and feel what it was like aboard the old 'rack' system, hauling trains up the steep inclines of the Razorback in the 1800s.

Get a tactile sense of the history of rail in Queensland and even see the railway equipment at the former station including a steam train and other rolling stock, goods shed and water tank for steam engines.

### All aboard!

Ride on our Fettler's Trolley or see the 3D screening of the history of the Rack railway in one of the historic carriages. Please contact us for times and details.

