Stacey Locations

Bannockburn

See Inverell.

Coolatai

18 kms west of Wallangra and 42 kms north north east of Warialda (qv).

Delungra

34 kms north west of Inverell (qv) and 29 kms south east of Warialda (qv).

Graman

43 kms north north west of Inverell (qv).

Inverell (including Gilgai)†

Inverell is situated on a bend in the Macintyre River, 590 m above sea-level and 690 km north of Sydney. It has a population of 10,000 and is essentially a service centre to a mixed farming district. Mining has been a staple of the area since the 1870s with tin, sapphires, zircons and diamonds all being commercially exploited. The area is well known as a fossicking district, producing topaz, quartz, silver, diamonds, agate, petrified wood, rhodorite, tourmaline and lead, as well as sapphires, diamonds and tin. The Inverell area has long been a source of much of the world's sapphire supply.

Before white settlement the Jukambal, a sub-group of the Murri people, occupied the land. The first whites in the district were probably convicts who escaped chain gangs in the Hunter Valley. When white settlers arrived the convicts sometimes received pardons in return for acting as guides and interpreters.

Alan Cunningham became the first European to pass through the district on his ground-breaking trip to the Darling Downs in 1827. The first selection in the immediate area (Byron Station) was taken up at the confluence of the Macintyre and Swanbrook Rivers by Alexander Campbell c.1836, on behalf of the McIntyre Estates in Scotland. He was so impressed that he soon took up 50,000 acres himself on the other side of the river, naming his property 'Inverell', a Gaelic word meaning 'the meeting-place of the swans', of which there were apparently numerous in the 1830s. The property still exists, albeit greatly reduced, to the north of the town.

Colin and Rosana Ross established a store near a popular crossing on the Macintyre River in 1853 to cater to early settlers and to teamsters headed north to the Darling Downs. He soon added a water-driven flour mill and an inn. Ross Hill bears their name and nearby streets were named after their children. The residents petitioned for a townsite to be laid out in 1855. By 1859 there was a Presbyterian church (most early settlers being Scottish), two stores, two inns and a collection of bark huts and tents. By 1861 the population had reached 177.

Merino sheep were fundamental to the district in the early days. From 1866 small selectors moved into the area and began wheat-farming. Tin discoveries in the area were sparked by a find at Elsmore, 14 km to the east and, by 1875, 500 men were employed at the Inverell mine, including many Chinese. Consequently the town entered a period of strong growth, becoming a municipality in 1872.

Diamonds were discovered at Copes Creek in 1875 and were mined at Copeton from 1883-1922. Other minerals, metals and gems were soon being mined, including bauxite, lead, silver, sapphires and zircons. The population jumped from 1,212 in 1881 to 5,131 in 1911.

The Sapphire City Floral Festival, a celebration of the arrival of spring. It lasts a week with a street parade, a ball, fireworks, displays, competitions and other activities. The Sapphire City Markets are held on the third Sunday of each month and the Hobby Markets on the first Sunday in Campbell Park, by the river.

Oakwood

18 kms north north west of Inverell (qv).

Reedy Creek

See Warialda.

Tenterfield (including Wallangarra)†

Tenterfield, 715 km north-east of Sydney and 275 km south of Brisbane, is a town of deciduous trees which are seen to best effect in autumn. It is situated in a shallow valley 882 metres above sea-level at the northern end of the New England Tablelands in an area of rugged mountains and rural vistas. It proclaims itself 'The Birthplace of the Nation' as Henry Parkes chose this spot to deliver his crucial Federation speech of 1889, which led to the establishment of Australia as a unified nation in 1901.

The Tenterfield area is devoted to sheep and cattle though orchards, farm crops, a silica mine and a growing tourism sector all contribute to the local economy. The current population is 3,500.

The original inhabitants, the Jukembal Aborigines, reputedly called the area 'Moombillen', meaning 'place of wild honey'.

The first European in the area was Allan Cunningham who passed by about 25 km west of the present townsite when returning from his exploration of the Darling Downs in 1827.

The first white settlers arrived in the late 1830s. The Deepwater station to the south was taken up in 1839 and the run later known as Tenterfield was first occupied in 1840. It has been argued that a Mr Templer was the first owner, naming the property 'Templerfield'.

Robert Ramsay Mackenzie took up the run in 1840 and was granted legal title in 1842, although he was then in business with Stuart Donaldson who acquired the property in 1844. Both men later became state premiers. Donaldson allegedly suggested the name 'Tenterfield' after the property of two maiden aunts in Scotland.

A bullock dray track to the coast was completed in 1842. By 1848 Tenterfield covered 100,000 acres. In 1851 Donaldson fought in the last known duel in Australia against surveyor-general Sir Thomas Mitchell. After three shots a draw was called and no-one was injured, though Donaldson's hat was reputedly shot off. Possibly the duel was complicated by Mitchell declaring the township of Tenterfield on Donaldson's station.

From 1847 until the late 1860s most of the wool of New England district passed through Tenterfield en route to the coast. Court hearings were established at Tenterfield in 1847. In 1849 a post office was set up and the first publican's license was issued for the Georges Inn (on the site now occupied by the Royal Hotel). A townsite was surveyed on the Tenterfield station that year. It was gazetted as Tenterfield in 1851, by which time there were some police buildings and huts. In 1854 the first land sales took place and a flour mill was built. In 1856 the population was recorded as 133.

Gold was discovered at Drake in 1858, sparking other discoveries in the district. This proved a boost to the township which acquired a bank in 1859 and an Anglican church in 1860.

The bushranger known as 'Thunderbolt' (Fred Ward) was in the Tenterfield area in 1868. It is believed he may have attended the Tenterfield races. One story claims that, after holding up a group of German musicians who were headed for Queensland and who pleaded with him not to proceed with the robbery, Thunderbolt promised that if he had luck at the horse races he would repay them with interest. He allegedly obtained their Queensland address and duly sent them their money back, with interest.

Tenterfield was declared a municipality in 1871. The town further prospered from alluvial tin mining in the 1870s with the population almost doubling. 1886 saw the arrival of the railway.

The most memorable single event in the town's history occurred at the Tenterfield School of Arts in 1889 when five-times premier of NSW, Henry Parkes delivered his famous speech calling for the federation of the Australian colonies. This is credited with setting off the chain of events which culminated in the declaration of the Australian Commonwealth in 1901.

J.F. Thomas, the man who defended 'Breaker' Morant, was a native of Tenterfield and, for 16 years, was the owner of the local newspaper, the 'Tenterfield Star' which pressed for Federation and was the first country paper to advocate the formation of the Country Party. Poet 'Banjo' Paterson was married here in 1903 in the timber Presbyterian (now Uniting) Church.

Noted Australian entertainer Peter Allen was also born here in 1944 as Peter Woolnough, the grandson of George Woolnough, celebrated in Allen's song 'Tenterfield Saddler'. Allen was discovered by Judy Garland in 1964, was briefly married to her daughter Liza Minnelli, and became highly successful both in Australia and the United States. He died in 1992.

The town's Agricultural Show is held annually in January or February. Other events are Oracles of the Bush, focusing on the poetry and music of the bush, the Autumn Colour festival in mid-April, Jack Frost Time in July-August and, in October, the Spring Wine Festival, the Highland Gathering, and Springtime in the Highlands (also known as The Federation Festival).

Wallangra

18 kms east of Coolatai and 67 kms north north west of Inverell (qv).

Warialda†

Warialda, population 1,285, is the major town of the Yallaroi Shire in north-western NSW. It is situated 602 km north of Sydney and 320 m above sea-level on a tributary creek of the Gwydir River. Warialda also lies at the intersection of two main roads, being 190 km north of Tamworth along the Fossickers Way and 62 km north-west of Inverell via the Gwydir Highway. Surrounded by pleasant bushland it is a service centre to a wool, sorghum and wheat-growing area which also has a number of stud farms.

The town's name is said to mean 'place of wild honey' and presumably derives from the tongue of the original inhabitants, the Weraerai Aborigines. Escaped convicts were probably the first Europeans in the shire, although Allan Cunningham was the first official visitor in 1827.

The first white settlement alongside Reedy Creek dates from 1837. A police outstation was established here around 1840. The townsite was gazetted in 1849. Two years later the population was recorded as being 45. Nonetheless Warialda became the first administrative centre of the north-west with a mining warden, magistrate and lands commissioner based in the village.

The railway arrived in 1901 and the population peaked in 1911 at 1,762 but slowly declined thereafter. The bushranger 'Thunderbolt' (alias Fred Ward) was active in the area in the mid-1860s, holding up the Warialda mail in 1865. The town was also the birthplace of Elizabeth Kenny (1886-1952) who spent her early childhood here and later dedicated her life to helping children afflicted with infantile paralysis, developing a revolutionary polio treatment program. She was christened in the font which is now situated in the town's Anglican Church of Saint Simon and St Jude.

The town's Agricultural Show is held in May.