

HEAD SOUTH FROM NAROOMA along the Princes Highway and over Corunna Lake Bridge. Take the first road on your left after the bridge to Mystery Bay.

ON THE ROAD TO MYSTERY BAY

This land was selected late 1870s. A recreation reserve at the southern entrance to Corunna Lake was gazetted in 1895. Early this century, it had a well-formed cycle track, pavilion, dressing sheds and playground equipment. Corunna Beach was popular for Tilba district people until World War I.

STOP 1: MYSTERY BAY (at swings opposite Lamont Drive near the rock with plaque)

This used to be called Mutton Fish Bay because of its plentiful abalone (mutton fish). It became Mystery Bay after 1880 and the mysterious disappearance of NSW Mines Department geological surveyor Lamont Young and four men.

It was never determined conclusively whether Lamont Young and his assistant left Bermagui to go fishing with the three men from Batemans Bay in their boat, or if they had hitched a ride with them to examine gold finds on Corunna Beach.

Young had been sent from Sydney to check out the new Montreal gold diggings near Bermagui. Their holed boat was found on the rocks at Mutton Fish Point (also called Corunna Point). Some of Young's personal effects were found in the boat which remained there for years and slowly disintegrated.

An investigation failed to solve the mystery. The tale is retold in Cyril Pearl's "Five Men Vanished - the Bermagui Mystery".

Mystery Bay became the favourite picnic destination for locals after World War I. Eurobodalla Shire Council subdivided Mystery Bay in 1959.

Head back towards the highway BUT take the second road on your left which is Sunnyside Road. This rolling farmland was once all dairy farms. Pull over just before you turn on to the highway to the left of the tree in the centre of the road.

STOP 2: KENT FARM

The first farm you see just over the fence is called "Kent Farm" which was one of the biggest milk suppliers to the ABC cheese factory at Central Tilba. "Kent Farm" and the other two farms to the south-east between here and the coast -

"Tiverton" (formerly "Avondale") and "Haxstead" (on the coast) - were selected by the Read brothers in 1873. They walked their herds up from Bega, not missing a single milking along the way. "Haxstead" was owned by Jeff and Dame Zara Bate in the late 1960s / early 1970s. Tilba Lake can just be seen.

The picturesque farm buildings to the south are "Henkley" which was owned by the McFaul family most of this century.

Turn left on to the Princes Highway. The second school in the district (1879-1900) was where the "log cabin style" house is on the bend (left). It was originally called Noorooma school.

Take the first road to the left (Sherringham Lane) and follow the signs to the cemetery. Go straight ahead, past the stockyard on your left and veer right, down through three gates to the cemetery on the coast. THIS ROAD CAN BE IMPASSABLE IN WET WEATHER; IF WET, PARK AT THE TOP OF THE HILL. It is a public road to the cemetery and beach. PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO SHUT THE GATES.

STOP 3: TILBA CEMETERY

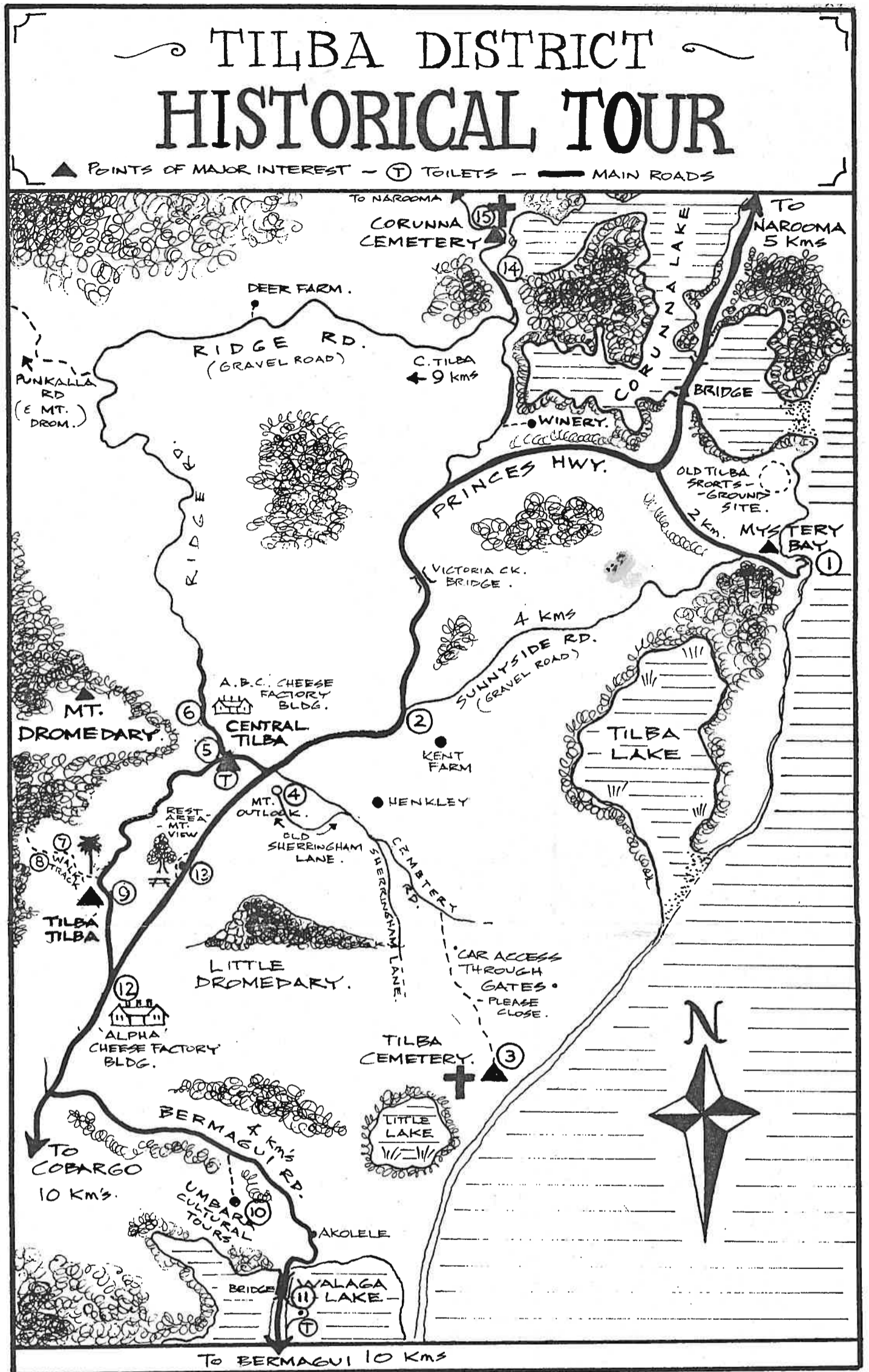
Quite a view, isn't it! The cemetery is located beside the original bridle track between what was called Noorooma and Bermagui.

Off the coast is Montague Island (Barungaba) which was the end of a promontory 10,000 years ago, before the last big rise in sea levels. Captain Cook mistook it for exactly that and headed further out to sea to round it, naming Mt Dromedary as he passed.

The first cemetery was located on "Haxstead". This is the second cemetery (1.4 hectares) which was established at the turn of the century. Herein lie a lot of the "movers and shakers" of the Tilba district and it's well worth a stroll.

The Anglican is the first enclosure you reach. The graves include those of Samuel W. Bate - the founder of Central Tilba; his brother Richard M. Bate - the founder of Tilba Tilba village; their mother - the family matriarch Elizabeth Kendall Bate; and their brother-in-law William Corkhill who took the photos known as the Tilba Tilba Collection in the National Library.

There's also Henry Jefferson Bate (known as "HJ"), the son of R.M. Bate and noted state



member of parliament and a leader of the NSW dairy industry for the first half of the century. Also there's HJ's son Jeff Bate whose third wife was Dame Zara. Jeff was a State and later Federal member of parliament.

Those in the Wesleyan cemetery include some of the Read, Latimer and Fookes families. There is also John Forster whose parents Thomas and Mary Forster had all the land between Wagonga Inlet and Wallaga Lake before free selection in the 1860s.

Look along the coast to the north. This area, once dairy farms, was subdivided in the early 1980s. The blocks now mostly belong to Sydney-based business people.

On the edge of Little Lake, just down the hill south-west from the cemetery, are the remains of the "Lake View" gold mine (1911-1916).

Go back towards the highway and PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO SHUT THE GATES. Take the second road on the left called Old Sherringham Lane (before you get to the highway). It's a short cul-de-sac.

STOP 4: VIEW OF GULAGA (Mt Dromedary) Look across the valley to Gulaga, the big mountain which dominates the Tilba district. The Aboriginal "Gulaga" for Mt Dromedary is becoming increasingly popular. Other spellings last century were "Cooligah" and "Caluga".

Gulaga is special to our local Aborigines; the great spirit Daramulun went up to the sky from Gulaga when the Yuin people were created.

The large rocky outcrop close by to the south is Little Dromedary or Najanuga.

There's an old story that Gulaga had two sons who left her to travel towards the sunrise. When they got to the sea, she called her younger son back. The older son, Barungaba (Montague Island), went into the sea; the younger son is Najanuga (Little Drom). The three outcrops are cones from past volcanic activity.

There were good relationships between early Tilba settlers and local Aborigines.

Go back to the Highway. Cross the Princes Highway and head for Central Tilba. Turn into Bate St and find a parking spot wherever you can.

Tilba District Tour

This tour can start at any point; check the map inside. It's written as if you start from Narooma.

It can last from a few hours to a whole day.

It's a very enjoyable driving tour with some walking. The amount of walking is variable, depending on how you feel.

Duration: 3 hours to a full day

STOP 10: UMBARRA CENTRE

Call in at the centre to find out more about the culture of local Aborigines (open 9am to 4pm, 7 days a week). Umbarra guides run activities and 4wd tours to special sites (book for 4wd tours). Continue on the Bermagui Road, across Wallaga Lake Bridge and stop on the island at the end of the bridge.

STOP 11: WALLAGA LAKE BRIDGE

Wallaga Lake Bridge was built as a result of intense lobbying by the Tilba community. A bridge gave access to the steamer wharf at Bermagui and hence the Sydney market, regardless of whether the lake was open or closed to the sea. It was officially opened April 19, 1894.

Before the bridge, produce from the Tilba district was shipped via Narooma (if the lake was open) or punted across Wallaga. If the lake was closed, it was taken along the beach to Bermagui. Return to the highway. (There is a good view of the Tilba valley if you cross the highway into Mead's Road but it is difficult to turn). Head north on the highway but pull off the road to the left just before the Tilba Tilba turnoff (there is a track).

STOP 12: TILBA TILBA CHEESE FACTORY

Opposite is the co-operative cheese factory (1925 - 1972). It averaged about 10 suppliers. As well as cheddar, it produced Edam cheese for the Dutch in the East Indies before World War II. The Co-operative had only two chairmen - H.J. Bate and his son Jeff Bate.

Turn back on to the Highway. Stop at marked rest area on the left as you go up the hill towards Little Dromedary.

STOP 13: REST AREA

This stop gives you some appreciation of Tilba Tilba in relation to Guluga.

Just to the south, between Tilba Tilba and the highway, is the site of the two day agricultural show held each February from about 1902 to 1928.

Continue driving back towards Narooma. After crossing Victoria Creek, take the road on the left to the Deer Park and Winery. Follow the Narooma signs to Corunna past the winery.

STOP 14: CORUNNA

Stop opposite the big machinery shed on the right. There was a small settlement at Corunna from the late 1870s. Selectors were mostly Wesleyans who came from Kiora (near Moruya).

There was a school (1893 - 1938), a post office (1879 - 1943), the Corunna Cheese Factory (1893 - 1923) where the big machinery shed is today (it was Rob Thompson's Farm Machinery business until recently) and a Wesleyan church near the cemetery (across the lake), and McMillan's Sawmill along the shore of the lake.

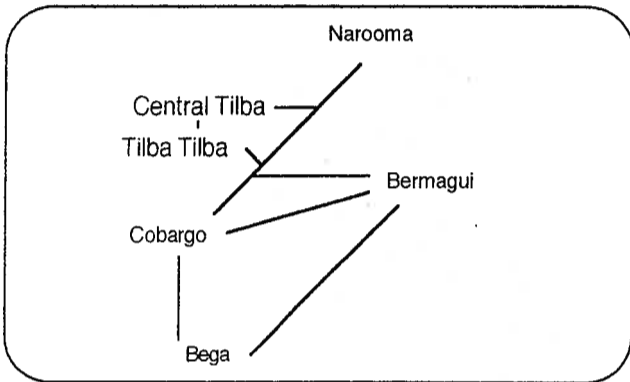
Drive across the bridge. If you would like to stop at the cemetery on the apex of the hairpin bend, DON'T TURN THERE. It's advisable to continue driving up the hill past the cemetery. Park safely beside the road and walk back to the cemetery.

STOP 15: CORUNNA CEMETERY

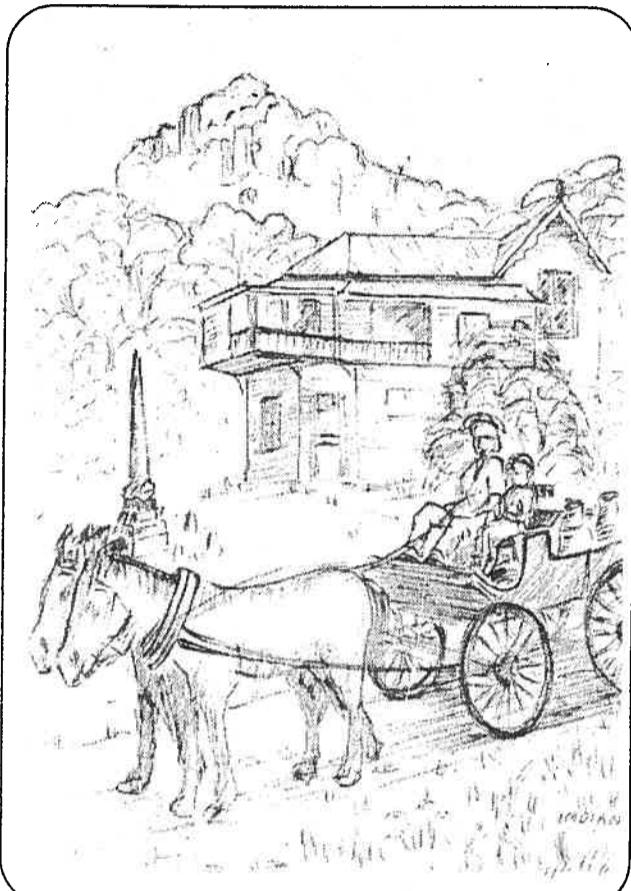
There are far more people buried here than there are headstones. Most families were too poor to erect anything more than a wooden cross. The headstones include those of Charles and Ann Snell of the property "Noorooma" and members of the Crapp, Bate, Negus and Poole families, all pioneer families in the area.

The Wesleyan church near here was pulled down quite a few years ago.

That's it! Enjoy your time in the area. If you continue north on this road, you will end up back at Narooma, or you can return to Central Tilba.



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STOP 12. Please refer to your map. You can extend your Tilba tour down to Wallaga Lake (an extra 10 kms return) with the option of a visit to the Umbarra Centre or, if time does not permit, go straight to

entrance fee, children under 12 are free. are open 9am to 5pm, 7 days a week. There is an "Foxglove Spire" just down the hill. The gardens Tilba with a visit to the magnificent gardens at

You may like to linger longer in Tilba with a gabled northern wing stretching back. Store) was once a much larger building than today. The former Tilba Hotel (opposite Pam's

"Green Gables". was moved from its original site on the hill behind "Green Gables" was the Agricultural Hall which The old partially restored hall to the south of

Good Templars' Hall. "Green Gables" Bed and Breakfast was once the north of town (built 1896). Church was located near the present church just

Tilba consisted of a hotel, two shops, a blacksmith, 7 acres of Tilba Tilba for a village. By 1892, Tilba About 1886, Henry Jefferson Bate had set aside the Lyceum Hall (now Pam's Store).

when he moved the business into what had been 1889 to Otho May who operated it until 1891 late 1870s to provide stores for selectors and

1889. He established a store on the property in the postmaster at "Mountain View" from 1873 to Henry Jefferson's son, R.M. Bate was the district's

STORE OR DOWN THE HILL AT "FOXGLOVE SPIRES". Return to Tilba Tilba and park if you haven't already done so. There's a car park near Pam's

the best part of a day to do it. You may like to climb Mt Dromedary from Tilba Tilba another time. It's a wonderful walk, but allow

innovator in many ways. Tilba households in about 1910. HJ was quite an

Electricity Grid. The scheme was preceded by a when the village was connected to the State

which are all that remain of Tilba Tilba's hydro-Tilba Creek is a concrete slab and some insulators

On the left, about 100 metres past the entrance to "The Valley Country Home", down beside the vegetable garden along here early this century.

have just passed. Harry Greaux had a large Matilda (1838 - 1873) are under the big tree you Jefferson Bate (1815 - 1892) and his daughter

Tilba slaughterhouse. The graves of pioneer Henry wooden structure on the right was the old Tilba At about 0.5kms from Pam's Store, the old

years, then Fetta and cottage cheese in the 1940s. closing in 1951. It produced cheddar for about 50 cheese factory operated for many years, finally

great grandson and family live there now. Its dairy property in the 1920s and 1930s. His great selection of Henry Jefferson Bate and a leading

"Mountain View" was the original Tilba Tilba towards Mt Dromedary (1.5 kms return) or drive. If walking, park in the Tilba Tilba car park near

At Tilba Tilba, you can either walk up the track towards Mt Dromedary (1.5 kms return) or drive. If walking, park in the Tilba Tilba car park near

After the present school, you pass an old wooden house on the right on a hill - "Marengo" - which was the home of William Corkhill, the well-known

This school was built in 1900. The first schools in the district opened in 1876 - one at Courta Creek (south of Tilba Tilba) and the other at Hurricane Hill out past the cheese factory.

100 men at its peak. Just below this lookout is the Company mine (1891 - 1910) employed up to investors for about 80 years. The Mt Dromedary

which run down from her lured diggers and Now here's a view! Mt Dromedary and the creeks

PLEASE KEEP TO THE TRACK. Fire Brigade garage near the hotel. Take the signposted track to the right of the Bush

STOP 6: WALK TO WATER TANK LOOKOUT. the National Trust as an historic village in 1974. The village of Central Tilba was classified by

owned and produces fancy club cheese. until 1981 when it was sold. It is now privately Co-operative in 1972; it operated the ABC factory

building was built around the old factory in 1925. cheese commanded a premium price. The present then the main road between Bodalla and Bega. Its

in New South Wales, built in 1891 on what was Tilba. It was the first co-operative cheese factory

The ABC Cheese factory was the hub of Central quarried behind Central Tilba. The Anzac memorial was built from stone

with Mrs Martha Graham as Postmaster. That new post office opened on January 4, 1905 then the post office had been in Crapp's store.

and residence by Joseph Crapp in late 1904; until storey building was built as the new post office with bakery and milliner. The distinctive two

one time the biggest store in the area, complete storekeeper. This store - Crapp & Boxsell - was at early 1895. Crapp was formerly a Tilba Tilba

Bate St (now called Bates Store) which opened Crapp built a bigger store on the opposite side of Hobbes and then Joseph H. Crapp.

1894 by S.W. Bate and operated by William on what was then called North Tilba. It was built in the north corner of Bate St was the first shop in

Princes Highway was referred to as the "Finger- post" or Crossroads for a few years. The building sale of his subdivision on April 23, 1895. Before then, the corner of Bate St and the old

STOP 5: CENTRAL TILBA. Spend some time strolling through Central Tilba. check out the shops and maybe have lunch or a cuppa. Pick up the free pamphlet "Central Tilba Living History" to find out more about the buildings in Central Tilba and Tilba Tilba. There is also a more detailed history - "Tilba Times".