

# Welcome to TINGHA

"Gem town of the North"

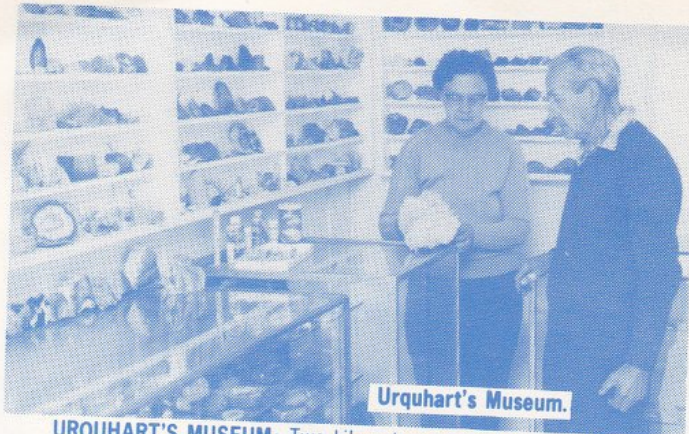
Centre of largest tin  
producing area in NSW.



Tingha's Gem Caravan Park on the banks of the largest natural swimming pool in the north.

This tourist brochure has been published by the Trustee's of the Tingha Gem Caravan Park with the co-operation of the advertised business houses who's services are recommended.

It is hoped you enjoy your stay with us.



**URQUHART'S MUSEUM:** Two kilometres west of Inverell Road, gems and minerals collected from the Tingha area are on display, also precious stones. Mineral specimens from every state and most overseas countries and many sea shells.

The Tingha area has much to offer to those in lapidary, such as smokey and clear quartz, rutilated quartz, jelly bean crystals, amethyst, rhodenite, citrines, diamonds, tourmaline, galena and tin.

Admission to the Museum is free. Freda and Cliff Urquhart will make everyone welcome and supply information about local areas, collecting of specimens, especially grass stones unique to Tingha.

**THE TINGHA GEM'S CARAVAN PARK**, which has become very popular to tourists, because of its new amenity block and large numbers of powered sites fronting the only natural swimming pool in the area and its shade of beautiful pine trees.

The park is noted for its cleanness and open surroundings.

It is situated one and a half kilometres east of the private town of Tingha.

The climate (in summer months) is very well accepted by tourists.

**OLD STEAM ENGINES:** There is considerable interest evidenced by collectors in the many old steam engines which are dotted around the town and throughout the district.

They are left overs from the old mining days when they were used for dredging and other power uses. Some of the accessories are lying next to the machines and should provide interesting material for the engineer or people interested in things of the past.



**AMENA ART GALLERY** is unique amongst the tranquil setting of the Australian bush.

Visitors are always welcome and after viewing the display of "Cosmic Art" may have a stroll through the organic gardens or have a bushwalk where there is plenty of wildlife and some large granite hills to climb.

The gallery is open every day between sunrise and sunset, except Thursday. Admission is free.

The gallery is only 5 km from the eastern side of the beautiful Copeton Dam.

**BUSH TOURS:** Chartered bus tours of the Tingha district are available for groups but at least 3 weeks notice is required. Any group interested in a tour which can include a visit to a honey extracting plant and bee goods, Amenas art gallery, Copeton Dam, Gilgai Winery, a tin mining plant and the Donkey farm are asked to contact the president of the Tingha Gem Caravan Park trust Mr Cliff Campbell by phoning Tingha 92.

**FOSSICKING AREAS:** The trustees of the Gem Caravan Park have arranged with three property owners where visitors may go fossicking.

Further information on these areas can be obtained from the caretakers at the caravan park or the Tingha Auto Port.

**GILGAI WINERY** situated on the Tingha Road near airport produces quality dry table wines.

With the wine industry been revived in 1968 Gilgai Red Vineyards was established by Keith Wish with the aim to produce good dry red and white table wine. A number of different varieties were planted. Recent additions have been a liqueur muscat and liqueur port.

The winery is open from 10 am to 6 pm Monday to Saturday and 12 noon to 6 pm on Sunday.

Visitors may purchase wines at the Cellars. Mail orders to PO Box 462 Inverell 2360.

**GRASS STONE:** A highly prized specimen for the fossicker is grass stone, for Tingha is one of the few places in the world where it exists.

Quartz in all colours is scattered throughout the area and sapphires are to be found as well, although it is as well to check with local authorities to find out which is "free" land and which is under lease.

**HONEY:** The familiar silver square box denotes commercial honey production and here and there one may see the silver hives stacked near the headquarters of the honey firms.

Visitors are welcome to inspect the honey extracting plant and bee goods of Mr Cliff Campbell on the swimming pool Road not far from the caravan park.

A prior phone call to Tingha 92 will ensure that Mr Campbell is home or for a time to be arranged.



**Smith Museum**

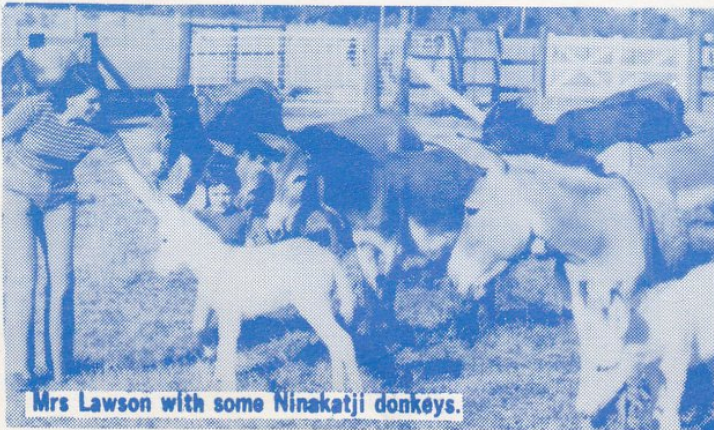
**SMITH'S MUSEUM:** Mining and Natural History Museum. Two kilometres east of the post office. A fabulous collection of specimens and rocks from all over the world. Local gem stones, precious and semi precious - cut and polished and in the rough.

There is also guns, aboriginal artifacts, antiques, bottles, Chinese relics from the early mining days. A large and interesting tin display taxidermy, including many freak animals. Bottled specimens, many of Australia's deadly species.

The museum is open weekends and all holidays. Also for school groups and coaches week days by appointment only.

The museum has earned itself worldwide recognition and is a member of International Committee of Natural History Museums of the World. It is a source of information on the past history of Tingha; depicting many photographs of early Tingha and families, and of the tin dredges.

Everyone is most welcome, curious service and helpful advice given on fossicking areas.



**Mrs Lawson with some Ninakatji donkeys.**

**NINAKATJI DONKEY STUD:** Visitors are most welcome at the stud situated about 8 km from Tingha on the Guyra Road but prior arrangement is required. By phoning Tingha 178 intending visitors can be sure that the owner Geoff and Susan Lawson are home.

Donkey rides are available for the children at certain times of the year.

# Colourful history

**TINGHA**, on Copes Creek, has the proud reputation of being the largest tin-producing area in New South Wales. Before 1870 the country around Copes Creek and Darbys Branch was held by large land owners, Darbys Branch being the boundary of land held by Captain Darby and Captain Goldfinch, men who had served in the Crimea wars.

The land mainly was given over to sheep, which were grazed by shepherds and herded at night. One of the shepherds from Newstead Station, Joseph Wills, made the initial discovery of tin which was to change the whole history of the New England area.

Wills discovered tin in 1870 near Elsmore and then a short time later tin was discovered at Tingha just above the junction of Copes Creek and Darbys Branch (Armidale Crossing).

The village of Tingha thus was founded in 1870.

In the 1870s thousands of people flocked to the Tingha field as a result of the tin discoveries. At the height of the rush there were from 6000 to 7000 people.

The banks of Copes Creek and Darbys Branch surrounding the Armidale Crossing were pegged out. Europeans' humpies covered the Guyra hill and the Chinese clustered along the river and the big flat.

Men of all nationalities had but one single purpose — tin — and because of the shallow ground everybody could at first make a living and prosperity reigned supreme.

Some 2000 Chinese moved to Tingha during the boom and mined for tin with hand appliances. There were three big Joss Houses and a Chinese Masonic Hall, as well as smaller Jos Houses.

Tingha's first post office was established in 1872 under the name of Armidale Crossing.

Tingha was proclaimed a town in 1885. Although it was founded on tin, many other minerals and gems were found in the area and all Tingha's streets are named after gems and minerals which have been found in the area.

The year 1890 saw the arrival of the first group of Sisters of St Joseph at Tingha to conduct a school. The first school and residence were in Diamond Street and in 1891 the residence of John Morrow in Ruby Street was acquired.

But even now the first blush of prosperity was ebbing. The easy surface workings had been exploited and there was a drought over the land which added to the miners' distress.

They had to have water to work their tin. The mushroom city which had sprung up began to melt away.

Many men left to go to the new field of the Howell silver mines and the Copeton diamond mines, which were being opened up.

By 1900 there were only a few hundred people left on the field and the town of Tingha could have been bought for a song. A few of the speculators remained, but the vast majority, including most of the Chinese, passed away, leaving but a faint trace of their occupation.

Those who had left the surrounding land under the spell of tin drifted back to their original occupation and many 40-acre blocks were taken up in the district.

The turn of the century started the new period in Tingha's history when the first dredges ushered in a new era of prosperity, re-working profitably ground which had been abandoned.

Now began the period of large companies and outside capital and Tingha boasted the first tin dredge in Australia.

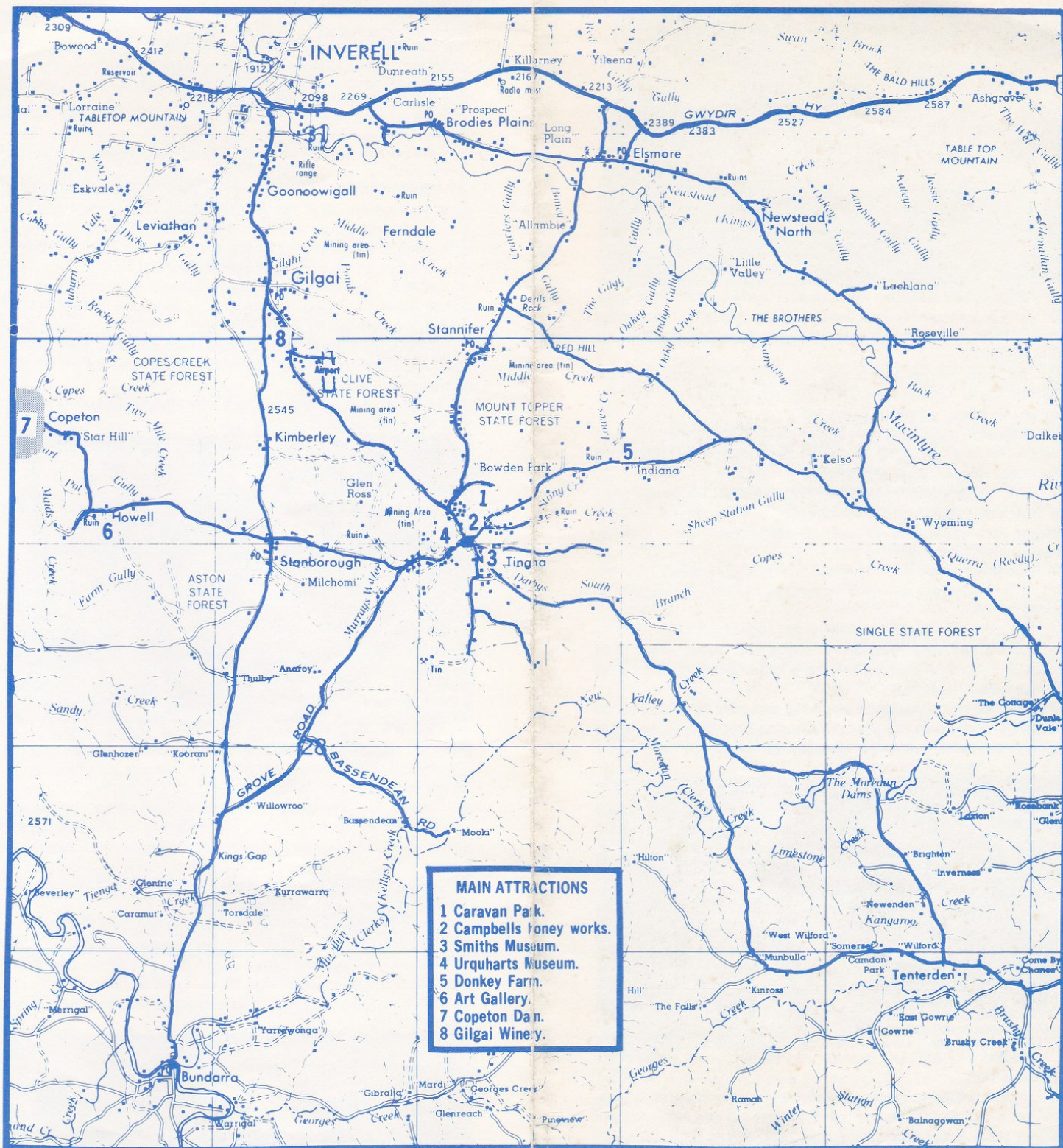
Shire councils came into being in 1906 and Tingha was incorporated in Guyra Shire during that year.

Although Tingha has changed from the rip-roaring town of the rush days, the glamour of tin still lies over the district.

Steady, unspectacular production goes on, but the occasional rumour of exceptionally good ground, or a rich reef, sets hearts beating and speculators speculating.

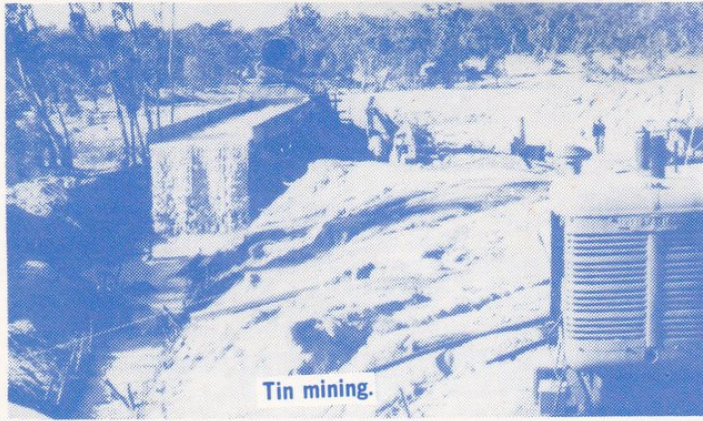
Photographically Tingha has many subjects from old machines used in past mining days, to unusual balancing rock formation and the older type of bush homes, fast dying out in many parts of Australia.

A large natural swimming pool with diving tower and turning boards is the place to cool off in during summer.



## TINGHA GEMS CARAVAN PARK

- New amenities • Powered sites
  - Natural swimming pool
- A QUIET SHADY PARK**  
Swimming Pool Road,  
Tingha, Phone 134



**Tin mining.**



**Copeton Dam eastern shore.**

**COPETON DAM, EASTERN SHORES:** Twenty-seven kilometres west of Tingha, via Stanborough. The recreation area, recently gazetted, has become a mecca for hundreds of people who visit this area each weekend.

**VISIT  
GILGAI RED VINEYARD  
AND WINERY**

**K.M. WHISH & SONS**  
PO Box 462, Inverell, 2360.

By approaching the dam from the eastern side the traveller will be rewarded with a panoramic view of the whole of the dam that can not be seen from any other area.

At the area itself boat launching facilities as well as toilets are available. It is envisaged that other facilities will be established in the very near future.

Boating, fishing and skiing are the main recreations carried out, with fish quite plentiful, Red-fin and catfish being the main species.

Local clubs have carried out a major programme of restocking the waters with other species of fish, such as yellow belly, rainbow trout, silver perch, at fingerling age to create better fishing in the future for the tourists and locals alike.

**STAN LING  
HEALTH & BEAUTY AGENCY**

For all your personal requirements

**Ruby Street, Tingha, Phone 27  
and also Inverell 22 3003**

**L. J. SCHUMAN**

General Engineers  
Oxy and Electric  
Welding

All mechanical repairs  
Olympic tyres available



## ROYAL HOTEL

JOHN & LORRAINE EYLES

### TINGHA

Icy cold beer on tap  
Good accommodation

## TINGHA NEWSAGENCY

R.E. KRUGER

Gifts and Souvenirs  
RUBY STREET, TINGHA — PHONE 184

## WING HING LONG & CO

### GENERAL STORE

RUBY STREET, TINGHA. PHONE 8

## J. D. & H. A. ROSE QUALITY BUTCHERS

MEET YOU WITH MEAT  
TO PLEASE YOU

RUBY STREET — PHONE 20

## The Country Road Cafe

Meals and Snacks - Take-aways  
Soft Drinks — Confectionery  
Grocery Lines

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK

Ruby Street, Tingha Phone 24

## MALCOLM & IRENE DARBY MILK VENDORS

Inverell Road Tingha

Delivers to Tingha and Gilgai

## DON MARSH & SONS SUPERMARKET

Wine and Spirit Merchants  
Drapery, Hardware and Electrical Goods

RUBY STREET — PHONE 15

## TINGHA AUTO PORT GENERAL STORE



Petrol  
Services

Oil  
Lubes

Party ice  
available

