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SOUNDTRAIL  
MOBILE APP

*Self Tour*

MAP AND  
DIRECTIONS  
ARE INSIDE

# INVERELL

*Heritage Walking Tour*



*What is history?  
 “An echo of the past in  
 the future; a reflex from  
 the future on the past.”*

Victor Hugo

## Preface:

This booklet was produced by **Inverell Shire Council** as a guide to exploring local history in and around Inverell's CBD. The booklet and accompanying Soundtrail mobile app has been developed with funding from the NSW Heritage Grants program.

### **The map: (Page 4-5)**

Provides an overview of site locations. Some places along the Self Guided Walking Tour are not items of heritage significance, however have been included for their significance, social or aesthetic importance to the community.

While viewing sites, please respect private property and be aware that not all sites are open to the public.

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The information in this book has been summarised and updated with the assistance of the Inverell and District Family History Group and Council's Heritage Advisor Mitch McKay.

### **For additional information, see the following:**

*World of its Own* – Inverell Early Years 1827 – 1920, E. Wiedemann (Author)

*Holding Its Own* – The Inverell District Since 1919, E. Wiedemann (Author)

*Local History collection* – Inverell Shire Library

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BLACKSHEEPSTUDIO

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## About Inverell:

Before the arrival of European settlers in 1827, the Inverell district was inhabited by the people of the Anaiwan and Kamilaroi nations. By 1835, squatters had moved into the district, establishing large sheep and cattle stations. The 1870s brought the discovery of tin deposits, followed by silver, diamonds and sapphires. The early 1900s saw the disaggregation of large land holdings into productive family farms and today, Inverell is a vibrant regional centre of over 11,000 residents, with the Shire population of 17,500.

**Origin of Name:** Inverell was named by the district's first settler Alexander Campbell. He took up 50,000 acres which he named Inverell, a Gaelic word meaning "*the meeting place of swans*". At the time there were large numbers of swans on the Macintyre River.

Inverell Shire Council is responsible for one of the largest local government areas in New South Wales. The area covers approximately 9,430km<sup>2</sup>, including the towns of Inverell and Ashford, and the villages of Delungra, Yetman, Gilgai, Tingha, Bonshaw and Graman.



*Otho and Byron Street, 1887*

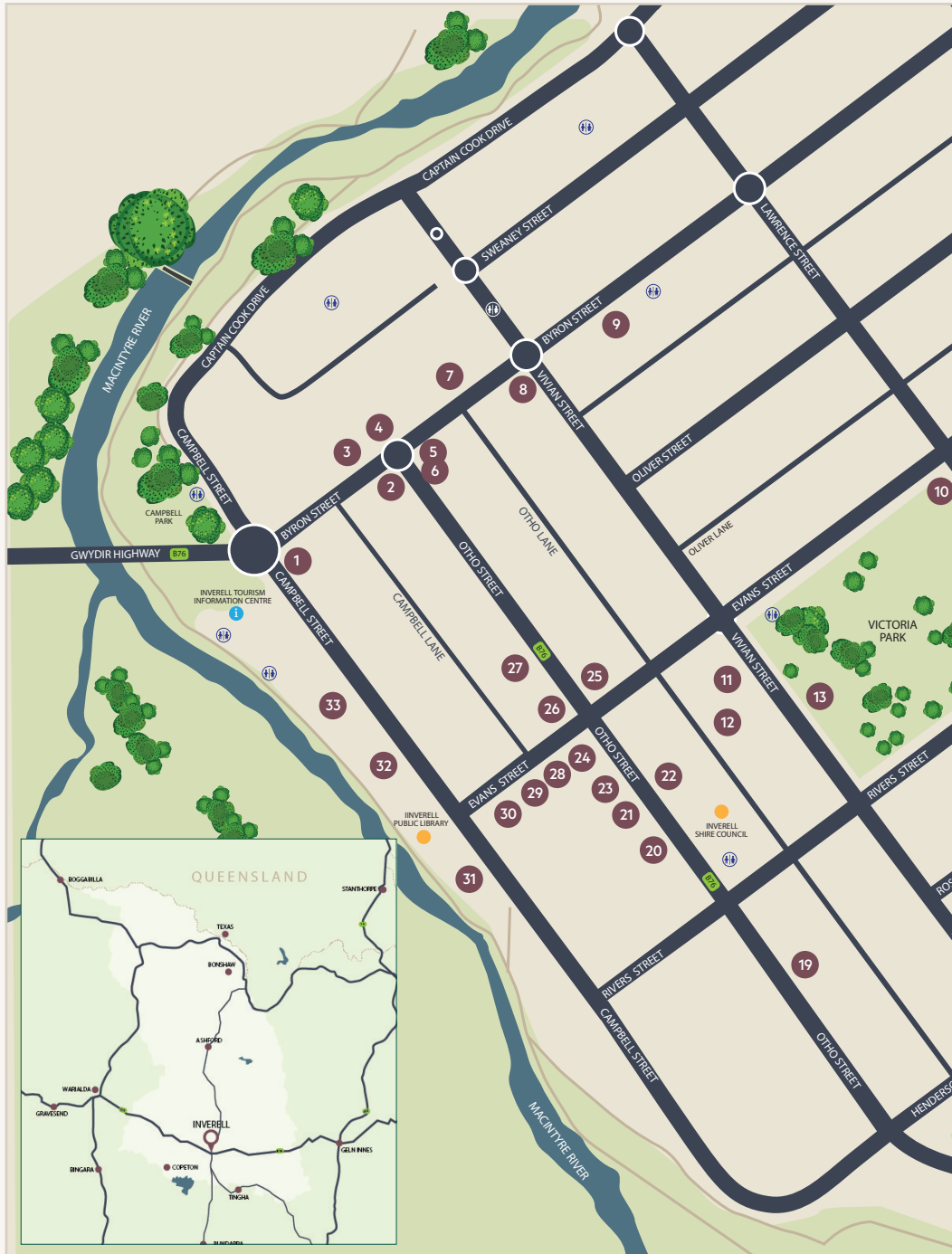


*Otho Street from the  
Court House Clock Tower, c1900*



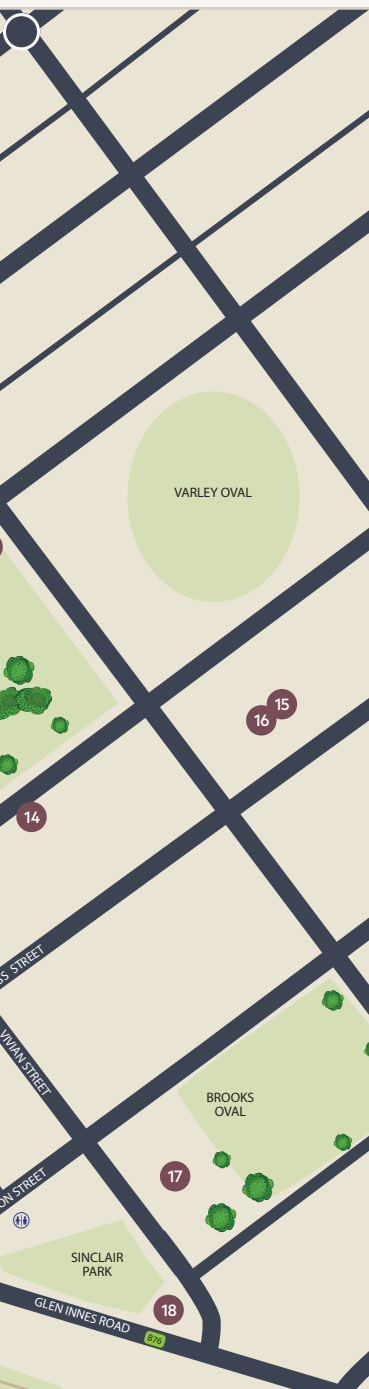
*Byron Street*





# Self Guided Walking Tour

## INVERELL TOWN CENTRE



Kerry Hardy

1	Empire Hotel
2	Former Hotel Inverell
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22	Former AMP building
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24	Inverell Town Hall
25	Byron Arcade
26	Former National Bank, also known as former CBC Bank of Sydney
27	Oxford Hotel
28	Former School of Arts
29	Butler Hall
30	The Inverell Club
31	Former Austral Band Hall
32	Former Water Treatment Plant
33	Former Power Station

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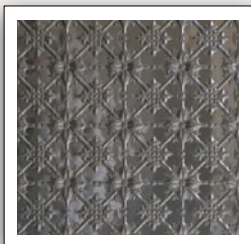


*Empire Hotel, Byron Street*



## Empire Hotel

Constructed for Dr. Thomas Lane, the Empire Hotel's first lessee was John Gordon. It is the most intact hotel in Inverell and the only one to retain its original verandah with cast iron balustrade. The last hotel in Inverell retaining its original verandah, on an important corner site opposite the main bridge and entry to the town across the Macintyre River.



The hotel had forty large rooms and stables. Wunderlich ceilings (left) were a feature throughout and an acetylene gas plant provided lighting to the hotel.

At the rear of the hotel there is a specially designed roof to admit light to the billiard room.

**Style:** Late Victorian

**Location:** 1-7 Byron Street

**Year Started:** 1902

**Year Completed:** 1903

**Builder:** George F Nott

**Architect:** Warren Scobie

*There had been reports and suspicions of a haunting at the establishment*





## Former Hotel Inverell

This three storey building was once a hotel and is of brick relieved by rough casting. Upon construction, it comprised thirty two bedrooms for the accommodation of the public, two dining rooms, five sitting rooms, a commercial room and six bathrooms.

At the time of construction, it was described as: *having ceilings throughout of varying design of asbestos cement and steel with wooden panelling and having two entrances to the hotel - the main from Byron Street and the other from Otho Street. These entrances were described as the former a hall of 10 feet in width and the latter one of 7 feet. The walls of both present a surface of rich warm red, with white freizes above - a combination in colouring that is strikingly effective. Facing the Byron Street entrance, and near the junction of the two halls, is a modernized Moorish arch, which adds considerably to the general decorative effect, and through which guests pass on to the main staircase.*

It was the last hotel constructed in the town and once had a three storey verandah - the ironwork moulded at the local foundry of H. Brown. The fenestration includes groups of French doors with windows on each side.

---

**Style:** Edwardian

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**Location:** 25-31 Byron Street

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**Year Started:** 1914

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**Builder:** Benjamin Martin Wade

---

**Architect:** Walter Morton Goodwin

---

**Modified:** c1964. Verandah removed and replaced with cantilevered awning

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*Former Hotel Inverell, Byron Street*



## Pastoral Chambers

**Style:** Colonial Revival

**Location:** 38-44 Byron Street

**Year Started:** 1895 - 1915

**Builder:** S Box

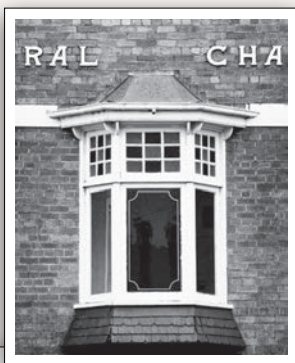
**Architect:** Walter Morton Goodwin

This site is where the town's first telegraph office was located and also where a lane that continued from Otho Street right down to the river once stood. In 1914 the whole block from the lane to the corner of Campbell Street was destroyed by fire.

John Borthwick, solicitor, decided to rebuild on his land and an adjacent block and this resulted in an enlarged building, the Pastoral Chambers, being constructed by a Sydney based contractor, S. Box in 1915.

The bank chambers were those of the City Bank of Sydney. This bank was established in 1863 and merged into the Australian Joint Stock Bank in 1916. The magnificent counter within the building is from the bank.

This building was described as: *standing on a concrete foundation and having a façade with a quaint balcony and fine spacious windows on the second storey set-off by a curved handrail. The walls are of brick with a galvanised iron roof unsurpassable as a water conduit. The floors and ceilings of the strong rooms, of which there are two – one in the bank chambers and one behind Messrs. Borthwick and Butler's offices are of cement concrete not less than 12 inches thick and reinforced. There is a fire-proof door to each strong room and in the walls of these room are eight vent openings.*



*Pastoral Chambers, Byron Street, 1915*



## Former Bank of New South Wales



**Style:** Victorian Italianate

**Location:** 56 Byron Street

**Year Started:** 1889

**Year Completed:** 1890

**Builder:** George Langley

**Architect:** Varney Parkes



*Former Bank of New South Wales, c1920*

This rendered brick former bank building is one of the finest and most sophisticated buildings in Inverell. Constructed at a cost of £6,789, it was designed by architect Varney Parkes, son of Sir Henry Parkes who was known as Australia's "Father of Federation".

It replaced an earlier bank which was a long low building prone to flooding after heavy rain - the cash reserves having almost been swept into the river several times. Constructed of 320,000 bricks it has foundations more than 4 metres deep and is reinforced with railway lines.

In 1944, the Mayor, Mr. T. Punch lobbied to demolish this former bank and continue Otho Street through to the river as he considered it to be an eyesore. He was defeated in the Council elections of that year and so too was his idea to demolish this building.

The bank moved to new premises in 1963 and sold the building to Council for use as their office. It is now privately owned.

*It is an outstanding intact Victorian Italianate style bank building and one of the finest and most sophisticated buildings in the Shire.*

## 5

## Victorian Post Box

**Style:** Victorian**Location:** Cr Byron Street & Otho Street**Year Constructed:** c1870**Manufacturer:** Robert Bubb & Son**Designer:** T W Levinge

*Domed top  
stylized Waratah  
with embossed  
Acanthus leaves.*



*Victorian Post Box as it appeared in 1870s*

This cylindrical cast iron painted post box, also known as a letter box or pillar box, has letter slots on two sides. On top of the domed top sits a finial of a stylized Waratah with embossed Acanthus leaves. It is a rare surviving example of a postal pillar box that forms part of a historic streetscape and represents a once common feature of local postal services.

The first iron letter receivers in New South Wales were installed in the Receiving Houses of Sydney and its suburbs in 1856.

Based upon a Belgian design, the boxes were circular with a Crown mounted upon the dome. The Crown was supported by "leaves". These boxes soon became widespread even being exported to New Zealand. It is interesting to note that these post boxes were not painted in pillar box red until the 1870s and posting slots were sometimes vertical to facilitate posting a letter from horseback.



## Imperial Hotel

In the 1860s this was the site of a wooden building called Ayres Hotel. Later part of what is now the Imperial Hotel, was built for Thomas Mather and was known as Mather's Hotel.

Mather's Hotel was expanded and became known as the Imperial Hotel in 1889. At the time it had forty four rooms for rent and was considered the premier hotel in Inverell.

Believed to have been constructed in 1889, this was the second brick hotel in Inverell and has a stucco finish with a fine parapet, triangular pediments and a decorative scroll. The pediments have heavy string coursing and were once above a two storey cast iron and timber verandah. That verandah was replaced between 1901 and 1914 with a cantilevered awning.

Several people of note have also stayed in this building including sport personalities Frank Sedgman and Lew Hoad, Prime Ministers George Reid and Robert Menzies, politicians Evatt, Caldwell and Holt (before Holt became Prime Minister). The politicians had been in Inverell for the opening of the by-election campaign for the seat of Gwydir in 1953, won by Ian Allen.

*In the 1860s this was the site of a wooden building called Ayres Hotel.*



*Imperial Hotel, Byron Street, 1907 - Interior stair case (top left)*





*The two-storey building as it appeared in 1920*



## The General Merchant

The General Merchant is Inverell's oldest commercial building and was constructed as a shop in 1867. The favoured construction material through the 1800s was timber because it could withstand some movement of the black soil beneath.

The appearance of stone was achieved by milling very wide boards as can be seen on this building. As fewer large trees became available, weatherboards became narrower, which is evident on many houses constructed in Inverell during the second half of the twentieth century.

In May 1939, then owners Fuller and Myer removed the original shopfront awning and attached a cantilevered awning, which was later removed. Over the years, the building has been the offices of the Inverell Times, a real estate agency and a hardware store. In 2016 the building was sold to the McNeil family who reinstated the front awning, added a side access and renamed it The General Merchant.

An unusual feature of this building is the swinging window to the right of the entry door. It is believed to have been designed that way to provide easier delivery of produce into the store.

**Location:** 72-82 Byron Street

**Year Started:** 1867

**Modified:** 1939

**Builder:** Francis Benedict Mulligan



*The Premier Store*





## Burge's Northern Emporium

**Location:** 53-61 Byron Street

**Year Started:** 1912

**Builder:** W B Leckie

**Architect:** John Burcham Clamp

This building was constructed in 1912 for Messrs Burge Bros. & Co Ltd. Stephen Burge was originally employed by storekeeper Colin Ross, who is often referred to as the “founder of Inverell”. He purchased Ross’ business in 1889 and moved it into this building, naming the business Burge’s Northern Emporium. The business employed 102 people of which 80 were counter staff and the emporium had over 25,000 square feet of floor space.

The building had two floors of department style shopping, selling goods including groceries, drapery, furniture, hardware and farm supplies. Upstairs housed a huge range of floor coverings and furniture, as well as offices, a hairdresser and a tea room where ladies in from the country for a day’s shopping could relax in style. A magnificent staircase and Inverell’s only passenger lift, serviced the customers. A self-service meat mart drew customers in large numbers. On the Vivian Street frontage, shops were added consisting of a bakehouse, butcher and auction mart.

*Burge Bros, remained in business on this corner until 1955.*



*Burge's Northern Emporium, c 1913*



## Australian Hotel

**Location:** 81-91 Byron Street

**Year Completed:** 1909

**Modified:** 1929, 1950

**Builder:** F Hickey

**Architect:** John Francis O'Connor

On 24 November, 1875 a disastrous fire occurred in the original hotel building that once stood on this site. Known as Lunney's Australian Hotel it had only been open for about four months when the fire occurred, however, business continued in a portion that had been saved with reconstruction commencing shortly after.

The hotel was demolished and a new hotel opened in 1909, by Kate Gilmore. In 1929 M.J. Bourke purchased and added the first single bottle department in Inverell, there were only two in the north-west.

Over the years the building has had numerous owners and licencees, as well as many tenants in the shops that form part of the building.

In the 1950s the original verandah was replaced with an awning.



*The wines, beers and spirits  
dispensed are guaranteed!*

NEWSPAPER AD. INVERELL TIMES. JULY 21 1911



*Australian Hotel, Byron Street, c1930s*

## 10

## War Memorial

**Style:** Victorian Italianate

**Location:** 69 Evans St

**Year Started:** 1924

**Refurbished & Rededicated:** 2015

**Builder:** Hidges & Co and  
Auslem Odling & Co

**Architect:** John Francis O'Connor

*The War Memorial was moved to its current location on 25th August 1958.*

*Left:*  
Unveiled and dedicated  
11th November 1924

*Far left:*  
c1930 as it stood at the intersection of  
Otho and Evans Street

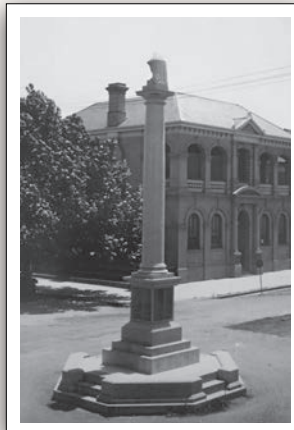


*War Memorial, Evans Street*

This war memorial was erected in 1924 at a cost of £1,210 and originally stood at the intersection of Otho and Evans Street (see photo below). It is constructed of one rock of granite from Uralla and contains the 229 names of the fallen soldiers.

The capital is 6.65 metres high. On the capital of the column rests a polished urn with a draping cloth resting over one handle. The column is Roman Doric in all proportions. The entire height of the column is 8 metres.

The war memorial was relocated to its present location in 1958 and in 2015 refurbished and rededicated.





*Lyndhurst, Vivian Street, c1876*



## Lyndhurst

Lyndhurst was constructed for Charles Egan, Inverell's first sheriff's officer, a bailiff and a cordial maker. Married twice, all of his 11 children were raised in this building.

In 1922 the building was purchased by the Sisters of Mercy, who were the owners of the adjoining convent. The downstairs rooms were used by the Sisters to teach music. It is believed that boy boarders were taken in from this time and were accommodated in the upstairs rooms.

In 2002 Lyndhurst and the adjoining former convent were sold to Gabrielle Sheridan, an American based criminal attorney. In 2017 it was purchased by Jo and Digby McNeil, who commenced the conservation work to both buildings.

Conservation work on Lyndhurst was completed in 2020.

**Style:** Late Victorian

**Location:** 67 Vivian Street

**Year Constructed:** c1876

**Renovated:** 2020

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## Former Sacred Heart Convent

**Style:** Late Victorian

**Location:** 69 Vivian Street

**Year Started:** 1908

**Year Completed:** 1909

**Builder:** George F Nott

**Architect:** Menkens & Castleden

**Modified:** 2020

The first Catholic teaching order in Inverell were the Sisters of St Joseph. They conducted a school on Campbell Street and later in a wooden building located on the corner of Vivian and Rivers Streets. The Sisters of St Joseph were replaced in 1891 by the Sisters of Mercy.

The building was completed in 1909 at a cost of £4,500 and the attached convent school opened in 1914.

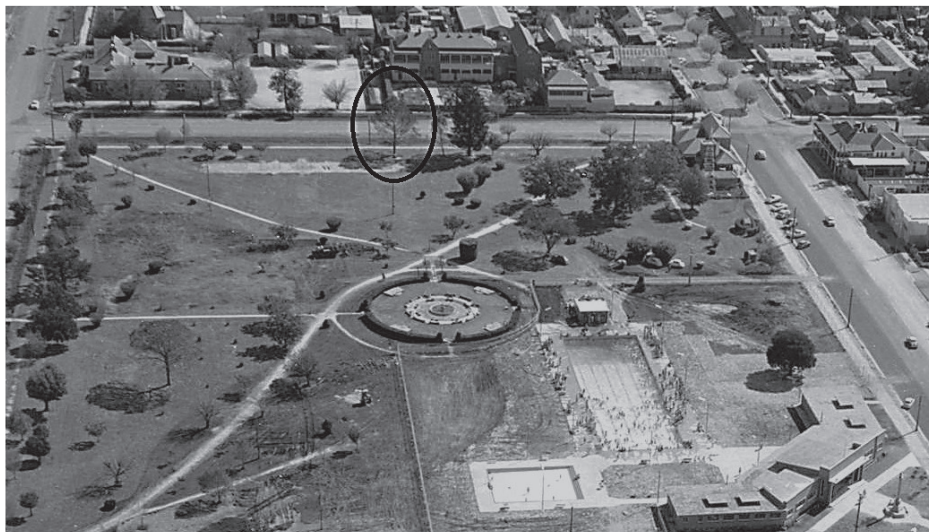
At the time, the former Sacred Heart Catholic Church and presbytery stood at the intersection of Otho and Rivers Streets where the Inverell Council offices now stand. The convent was vacated on 24 January, 1980.

The former convent and adjoining Lyndhurst were purchased by a private buyer in 2002 and in 2017 were purchased by Jo and Digby McNeil, who commenced the conservation work to both buildings.



*Former Sacred Heart Convent, Vivian Street, 1908*





*Gallipoli Lone Pine, Vivian Street, c 1930*

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## Gallipoli Lone Pine

*Nowadays,  
Australia Day  
ceremony is held  
in the park.*

**Location:** Victoria Park

**Year Planted:** 1930

**Year Felled:** 2007

**Seedling from:** Mrs. McMullin

On 6 August 1915 the 1st Australian Infantry Division launched a major offensive at Plateau 400 on Gallipoli, Turkey. The ridges, once covered with the Aleppo pine, had been cleared to provide cover for the Turkish trenches, leaving just one, solitary pine. The area became known as Lone Pine Ridge.

After three days of brutal fighting, the Anzacs succeeded in capturing the enemy trenches, but this bloody action cost the Australians 2,000 men. The Turks losses were estimated at 7,000.

After the battle, Lance Corporal Benjamin Charles Smith, 3rd Battalion AIF, sent several pine cones home to his mother, Jane McMullin, in remembrance of his brother Mark, who had died in the fighting on 6 August. Mrs. McMullin planted a seedling in Inverell in 1930, where both her sons had enlisted. Another was presented to the Australian War Memorial, to be planted in the grounds in honour of all the sons who fell at Lone Pine.

The Lone Pine planted in Inverell stood in Victoria Park until it was felled in 2007, due to disease, and another seedling was planted in its place.



## 14

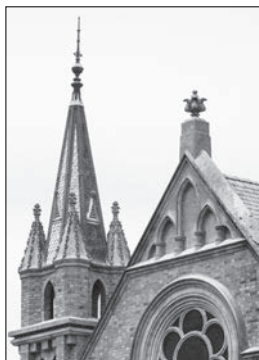
Taylor Memorial  
Uniting Church**Style:** Romanesque**Location:** Rivers Street**Year Started:** 1904**Builder:** George F Nott**Architect:** Herbert Ernest Ross

This site comprises two places of religion. The first church with its steep iron roof, face brick, modest buttresses, Gothic shaped window heads and plaster over the front door was constructed in 1874.

The main church was designed by Sydney architect Herbert Ernest Ross, son of Colin Ross one of the pioneers of Inverell. It was constructed in 1904 by George F. Nott with funds from the Will of Thomas Taylor.

Its Romanesque style features gable ends and five rosette windows, with decorative arches in the gable ends and a half octagonal entry porch with lancet arches topped with pediments and a slate roof and tower. The church houses an organ (pictured) constructed c.1927 by Whitehouse Bros. at a cost of £1,300. The fine red cedar case was designed by the local grazier, James Nicholas, and constructed by local craftsmen. It features two towers flanking a central flat in three sections, all of which is surmounted by carved pipe shades.

Both buildings were constructed under the Methodist Church of Australasia before the Methodists came together in 1977 to form the Uniting Church in Australia.



*Taylor Memorial Uniting Church, Rivers Street, 1904*



*Anglican Rectory, Rivers Street, 1919*

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## Anglican Rectory

This fine, large yet modest brick and tile vicarage was constructed in 1919 and replaced an earlier vicarage that once stood on this site.

In 1918 the Parochial Council had decided that the earlier vicarage was not in keeping with the dignity of the Church and it was sold to Wesley Burgess to be used as building material. The new vicarage was officially opened in 1919.

The foundation stone, which was laid on 4 August, 1918, bears the inscription:

*'To the Glory of God this stone was laid in grateful recognition of the men of this parish who volunteered for the defence of the Empire in the great war, 4th August 1918. Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ.'*

**Style:** Federation

**Location:** 33 Rivers Street

**Year Constructed:** 1919

**Builder:** Samuel H. Curry

**Designer:** Robert Newburgh Hickson  
& Mrs E Thomas



## 16

St Augustine's  
Anglican Church**Style:** Victorian Gothic**Location:** 33 Rivers Street**Year Started:** 1878**Builder:** Moore Bros**Architect:** John Horbury Hunt**Modified:** 1920

*A memorial rose garden has been planted to honour past members of the congregation*

Inverell's first Anglican Church, funded by Colin Ross, was constructed in 1869 of timber and shingles in Vivian Street. In 1874 Inverell received its own Minister, Rev E.A. Spooner and by 1877, Canadian born architect John Horbury Hunt had designed this church, which was constructed at a cost of £2,600. It was opened in August 1878 by Dr. Turner, the Bishop of the Diocese with the Rev R.K. Ewing inducted as its first Vicar.

This church is of English bond face brick on a rubble granite base – the bricks having been hand-made. The original shingle roof was replaced by Bangor slate from Wales in 1920.

Typical Horbury Hunt interior details include irregular windows with different arrangements on both sides, decorative brick chancel arch and iron roof line extending beyond the walls. Inverell families donated the pulpit, choir stalls, communion table, church bell and wrought iron gates. The pipe organ was purchased in 1913 at a cost of £450 and was reconstructed and mounted in a loft above the main door in 1971. The pews were constructed of cedar. The stained glass windows were given in memory of families in the parish and two honour rolls recall those who served and died in the wars.

The Church did not have a front porch until the mid 1920s when hand-made bricks from a demolished house were used to construct a porch to match the original church bricks.



*St Augustine's Anglican Church, Rivers Street, 1878*

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## St Andrew's Presbyterian Church

Early Presbyterian Church services in Inverell were held in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Colin Ross. The first Presbyterian Church was constructed in 1857 on the banks of the Macintyre River at the lower end of Vivian Street. Rev James Cameron ministered to the people of Inverell with regular visits from his Wellingrove Parish until 1869, before Rev Thomas Acheson Gordon became the first minister at Inverell.

After the floods of 1872 it was decided a new church was needed. The current Gothic style buttressed church was constructed at a cost of £3,300 and opened in May 1878.

The church is constructed of English bond face brick and strengthened by buttresses on each side. It has a slate roof and a prominent tower with spire. The church includes white stuccoed concrete trims (with articulated quoining), original rainwater heads, lancet windows and three lancet windows with rose window to the west end.

The church seats about 250 people - double pews running down the centre, with passages (they cannot be correctly constructed of cedar termed aisles) and single pews on each side.

The pipe organ was installed in 1927 as a gift in memory of Mr. P.C. Campbell. The organ is in almost original condition with a red cedar case and console, original pipe work and tubular-pneumatic action.

Associated with the church has been the Minister's residence. Known as a manse, the first was burnt down in 1907. The second, constructed in 1908, was located in Vivian Street. The current manse, which was designed by Inverell architect R.H. Lockwood, was constructed in 1953.

**Style:** Gothic Victorian

**Location:** 94 Vivian Street

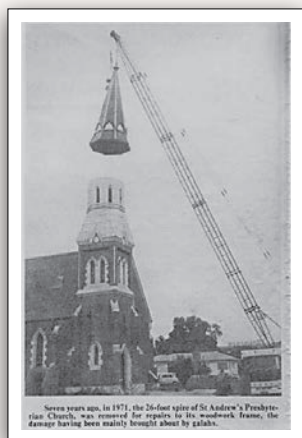
**Year Started:** 1876

**Year Completed:** 1878

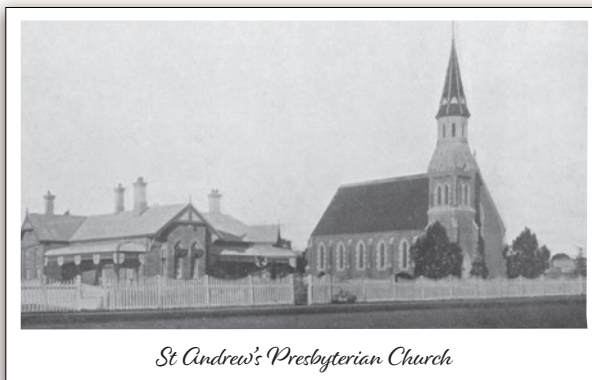
**Builder** Moore Bros

**Designer:** Alexander Leckie  
Elphinstone

*26 foot spire  
was removed for  
repairs due to  
Galaks causing  
damage to the  
woodwork frame.*



Seven years on, in 1871, the 26-foot spire of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, was removed for repairs to its woodwork frame, the damage having been mainly brought about by galaks.



*St Andrew's Presbyterian Church*

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## Scottish Memorial Cairn and Bicentennial Memorial

**Location:** Sinclair Park, cnr Henderson Street and Glen Innes Road

**Year Completed:** 1988

**Designers:** R.H. Lockwood



*The Scottish Memorial Cairn*

**The Scottish Memorial Cairn** was erected in 1999 as the result of a community project involving the Inverell Scottish Association Inc. and the Inverell Shire Council.

Conceived by Wally Kerr and Bruce MacDonald with the assistance of architect Tim Shellshear, it pays tribute to the achievements and contributions made by the Scottish pioneers of the Inverell district.

The cairn features black basalt stones from Colin Ross' store, which later became the Capitol Theatre, which stood on the corner of Byron and Campbell Streets.

The cairn also includes two stones from Scotland's Scottish and Newcastle Brewery headquarters.

**The Bicentennial Memorial** was erected in 1988 by Inverell Shire Council. Designed by R. H. Lockwood of Inverell architects Lockwood and Kauter, the memorial features plaques depicting life from pre 1788 to the year of the bicentennial.

Inverell artist Max Caesar produced sketches for the panels and sculptor Father John Casey then crafted the original sculpture. Work on both the sketches and sculptures spanned two years.



*Bicentennial Memorial*





*Former Masonic Temple, Otho Street, 1901*

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## Former Masonic Temple

In 1876, James Hindmarsh initiated the Lodge in Inverell. Meetings were held in a room at Mather's Hotel until a new hall was constructed in 1879 in Vivian Street. A new building (also known as a temple) was constructed in 1902 in Otho Street due to increasing numbers.

By 1915, the Lodge had 90 members and another temple was constructed in October 1917 adjacent to the old temple.

The former Masonic temple can be described as a single storey stuccoed brick building of symmetrical Victorian Classical style with a four bay façade with pilasters and decorated capitals, two pediments and a Greek Revival style entry porch. Honour Rolls once lined the entrance walls in memory of those who left the temple to serve in WWI - Len Adams being the first member killed in action.

The building was sold to a private owner in 2018.

**Style:** Victorian Classical and Greek Revival Style

**Location:** 166 Otho Street

**Year Started:** 1901

**Year Completed:** 1902

**Builder:** Edwin W Rowland

**Architect:** James Warren Scobie and O'Connor & Ogilvie

**Years Modified:** 1917, 1937



20

## Courthouse

**Style:** Victorian Italianate

**Location:** 115-119 Otho Street

**Year Started:** 1884

**Year Completed:** 1886

**Builder:** Mr. Samuel Senior

**Clock Tower Builder:** Angelo Tornaghi

**Architect:** James Barnet

**Years Modified:** 1890, 1909, 1947, 1970,  
1983, **Year Refurbished:** 1987,

Minor alterations were made to the building and its immediate environment in 1890, 1909, 1947, 1970 and 1983, all, fortunately, leaving the integrity of the design undisturbed. A refurbishment of the building, on its centenary in 1987, required an expenditure of \$116,000.

*In about 1888, a local citizen, Bert Madden, astounded Inverell residents by daring acrobatic feats carried out on a small ball which surmounts the clock tower.*

The Inverell Times,  
Friday 29th August, 1952



*Courthouse, Evans Street, 1924*

Until a court building was commissioned in 1861, the magistrates met in the Inverell Hotel or in a former butcher's shop, converted into a place of public assembly. In 1862, the Inverell magistrates recommended that a large reserve be created exclusively for government buildings, including adoption of a court.

A brick court was completed in Campbell Street in 1862, however, it was criticized for being too small. J.H. Hindmarsh, Inverell's first solicitor and first mayor, pressed for a larger court and in 1871, construction of a new courthouse began, where the present police station stands. In August 1873, Inverell was proclaimed a District Court and Quarter Sessions town, and the court building was condemned as being "inadequate for the requirements of the district".

Designs for a new Courthouse were drafted in late 1883. Construction commenced in December 1884 and was completed in 1886 at a cost of close to £7,000, which was £1,500 over budget. This well detailed Courthouse with its central gable roof with two side wings, hipped roof, round arched windows with keystone motifs and panels above, large simple pilasters, moulded chimneys and dominant clock tower was constructed in 1886. No other courthouse in the region has such a combination of embellishments.

The tower required a few more years of patience and was not completed until 1890. The tower is surmounted by a double cupola, the drum for each dome being octagonal with each facet pierced by an arch.

## 21

## Former Rural Bank

This building has had two facades. The first in 1912 when it was designed by Sydney architects Ross and Rowe – Herbert Ernest Ross being a former Inverell resident. At that time, it was known as the Government Savings Bank of New South Wales and when nearing completion, it included, at ground level, a main banking chamber, strong room, manager's room and private apartments. The upper level was reached by a wide staircase made from New Zealand kauri.

The water supply came from two 2,000 gallon tanks situated on the southern side of the building, and there were brick stables at the rear and a dumb well to put in all surplus water.

In 1933, the building became the branch of the Rural Bank of New South Wales and it is believed that this was when the building was extensively renovated and the Art Deco bank façade added.

In 1982 the bank's name was changed to the State Bank of New South Wales. In 1990 the State Bank was dissolved and sold to Colonial in 1994; which later became the Commonwealth Bank of Australia. The building is now used as commercial offices.

**Style:** Art Deco

**Location:** 107 Otho Street

**Year Constructed:** 1912

**Year Modified:** c1933

**Builder:** Chris Harris

**Architect:** Ross & Rowe



*Former Rural Bank, Otho Street, 1912*

**Inverell's First Statue.**

It arrived yesterday and provided amusement for an interested few spectators in Otho Street. Inverell's first statue is for the comparatively new A.M.P. premises and is a group of three figures—a woman in classic robes and two subordinate figures in recumbent positions, one of whom holds a cornucopia, or horn of plenty, typifying, we presume the fine financial position of the person who insures his life and has the tenacity of purpose to keep on paying the premiums. The group came in eight sections and was not complete at the time of writing.

The Inverell Times,  
Friday 13th July August, 1923



*Former AMP Building, Otho Street, 1921*



## Former AMP Building

This building was constructed in 1921 at a cost of £8,000 for the Australian Mutual Provident Society (AMP). At the time it was constructed, the exterior appearance of the building was described as being a departure for Inverell, with the English Renaissance design.

With its symmetrical street façade including ground floor bay windows with entry doors each side and central gable at roof, its details include sandstone pilaster sill with coping over and a beautiful internal wooden staircase.

In 1923 a large statue was added above the curved windows. The statue, known as the Amicus Group, was dominated by the elegant Thyche, goddess of fortune and luck, who could be seen graciously watching over a young man, woman and child. It bore the Latin inscription, 'Amicus certa in re incerta' - 'A sure friend in uncertain times'. The statue was removed and its current location is unknown.

The building is now used as professional offices.

**Style:** English Renaissance

**Location:** 136-138 Otho Street

**Year Started:** 1921

**Year Modified:** 1923

**Builder:** Benjamin Martin Wade

**Architect:** Wright and Apperly



*Inverell Post Office, Otho Street, 1901*

23

## Inverell Post Office

The Post Office which stands before you was constructed in 1901 at a cost of just over £4,000.

In September 1868, a petition from Inverell to the New South Wales Post Master General's Department called for the erection of a building in which the post office and the telegraph office could be amalgamated.

Reporting on the petition, the superintendent of the Telegraph Department advised that arrangements were being made for the erection of a telegraph office and that an additional room might be added for a post office.

In February, 1869, the telegraph office building was completed and a new brick post office, including residence was constructed on the present post office site in 1874.

By 1900, it had been decided to provide a new post office building. After some discussion, which included a rather complicated exchange of sites to enable a post office to be erected on a site reserved for the town hall, it was decided to demolish the old post and telegraph building and build on the old site.

Plans for the new building were prepared in 1901 and allowed for an office, public space, postmaster's office, telephone exchange, kitchen, sitting room, pantry, wash-houses, five bedrooms, bathroom and store room. It also included a telegraph and telephone line.

**Style:** Arts and Craft

**Location:** 97 Otho Street

**Year Constructed:** 1901

**Builder:** George F. Nott

*The first Inverell Post Office was established on 1 January, 1855 in Colin Ross' store.*

## 24

## Inverell Town Hall

**Style:** Victorian Style

**Location:** 5-7 Evans Street

**Year Started:** 1905

**Builder:** George F. Nott

**Architect:** Gordon McKinnon

**Modified:** 2013

*The Town Hall was the venue for travelling public entertainment nearly every week.*

In 1903 the Inverell Municipal Council conducted a competition to design a Town Hall, the first prize being awarded to Sydney architect Gordon McKinnon.

Finding themselves short of money for construction of the building, the Council approached D. S. Anderson for a loan of £1,000. Subsequently he agreed to a loan of £4,000 and construction commenced on 11 January 1905.

The Town Hall was opened on 9 August of that year by the Hon. Broughton Barnabas O'Connor, M.P., Minister of Public Instruction and Minister for Labour and Industry, in an elaborate ceremony which included a dinner, entertainment and a ball. The building was completed at a cost of £3,980 with furniture being an additional item bringing the costs to about £4,500.

In its early years the Town Hall was the venue for travelling public entertainment nearly every week. Its annex was the headquarters of Inverell Municipal Council and it also housed a small public library.

In 2013, renovations consisting of retractable seating, an upgrade of the main entrance, provision of an access ramp, improved acoustic performance, air-conditioning, a lower storage area and an extension to the stage on the Evans Street frontage were completed.

Together with the Courthouse and the two adjacent halls in Evans Street, it forms a relatively rare group of Victorian styled civic buildings in country New South Wales.



*Inverell Town Hall, Evans Street, 1905*



25

## Byron Arcade

The original Byron Arcade was constructed in 1903 for George A. Cruickshank, M.P. for Gwydir and owner of Byron Station, Inverell, at a cost of £13,000. At the time, it was the largest building in the north of New South Wales.

Designed by Sydney architect John Brain Spencer, it contained many similarities with the Strand Arcade in Sydney, which Spencer also designed, including a glass roof, wrought iron railings, archways, cedar joinery and specially designed light wells giving natural light to the ground floor shops.

It was one of the buildings erected to replace the fifteen destroyed in the fire of 1902 and contained 32 shops, a hall and a restaurant but by the time it was completed there were sufficient other new premises along Otho Street and the Byron Arcade never realized its potential.

In the ensuing years the building had several owners and numerous alterations. In 1964 a false ceiling was introduced which obscured the clerestory windows of the roof and the wrought iron balustrade was removed.

Ownership of the building changed again in 1984 and in 1995 a severe hailstorm destroyed many of the clerestory windows.

In 2006 the building was again sold and on the morning of 24 January, 2010 a fire gutted the arcade.

The building that stands before you was constructed in 2015 utilising the remaining walls of the building destroyed in the fire. It comprises shops at ground level and apartments on the first level.

**Location:** 96 Otho Street

**Year Constructed:** 1903

**Year Modified:** 1964

**Year Re-built** 2015

**Original Builder:** William Noller

**Original Architect:** John Brain  
Spencer

At the Otho Street entry to the building you will see some of the original tiles and the remains of an earlier sign advertising a business that once operated from the building. Walk along the Evans Street frontage you will see a display that tells you more of the history of the building and shows some of the artefacts that were uncovered following the fire.



*Byron arcade with its glass roof, wrought iron railings, archways with cedar joinery.*



*Byron Arcade, Otho Street, 1903*



# Former National Bank

(also known as former CBC Bank of Sydney)

# 26

**Style:** Victorian

**Location:** 83-85 Otho Street

**Year Started:** 1891

**Builder:** Langley Bros

**Architect:** George Allen Mansfield

**Modified:** 1913, 1939, 1955



*Former Commercial Bank, c1910*

The building that stands before you was constructed in 1891 at a cost of £4,700 by Langley Bros. of Sydney. This attractive and well-detailed former Commercial Banking Company of Sydney building is a fine example of the Victorian era architecture and stands on an important corner site. Together with its cast iron fence and out buildings it makes a significant contribution to the quality of the streetscape.

Originally the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney operated from this premises and was Inverell's first bank. A new brick building was erected in 1878 next door to the original building which became the manager's residence.

It can be described as a two storey former bank and residence of rendered brick with slate hipped roof and ventilated eaves. It has moulded chimneys, a five bay front having round arched windows and Italianate hood mouldings and keystone motifs. There is a small central porch, flanked by pilasters supporting a curved pediment at first floor level and it has a triangular pediment roof line. The original verandah has been enclosed. Cedar has been used extensively internally and there is cast iron fence with mosaic tiled path at the front.

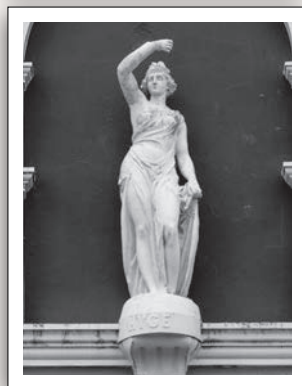
In 1913, extensive renovations were carried out and the old verandah was demolished giving more space for the staff and the public. The ceilings in the office and residential area were made of steel and the new counter was finished in Queensland maple, as were all the fittings. The metal fittings in the banking premises were electro bronze.

This building ceased operating as a bank in 1989 and is now privately owned.

*Commercial Banking Company - Inverell's first bank.*



## A Short Diversion Along The Walk



A prominent feature of the Inverell town centre is the intact parapets of the buildings along Otho Street between Byron and Evans Street.

At 36-38 Otho Street there is a striking Italianate Victorian parapet with statue. The statue is a representation of the Greek goddess of health, cleanliness and sanitation, Hygieia, in keeping with the building's traditional use as a doctor's surgery and later a chemist.

One of the first doctors to have a surgery in the building was Dr. Morton, who began his practice in 1920. After Morton's practice was watched over by Hygieia, Dr. McGuinness followed, then Dr. Higgins, Dr. O'Halloran and Dr. Snow. The building then became a pharmacy for many years until the current occupants.

*Dr. Morton retained the practice for over 30 years.*

## 27

## Oxford Hotel

**Style:** Mid-Victorian

**Location:** 61-67 Otho Street

**Year Started:** 1886

**Builder:** Allen Thorley

**Architect:** Charles May

**Modified:** c.1960, 2019

Constructed at a cost of £10,000, this hotel was the first two storey brick building in Inverell. It features a fine mid-Victorian style façade and parapet of distinctive pediment flanked by two urns.

At the time of completion, it was described as: *comprising fifty large rooms, including six sample rooms, public and private sitting rooms, large dining-rooms, billiards room and lit by acetylene gas. Twenty bedrooms were fitted with the latest convenience - electric bells.*

There were stables at the rear and in connection with the hotel there were also large sale-yards. The building originally had a passage way from Otho Street under the balcony so vehicles could go through to the yard which housed a twenty stall stable.

Influential landscape painter Tom Roberts is reported to have painted the coach and driver in this building for his painting 'Bailed Up' using one of the coaches as a model.

Behind the hotel stood the Oxford Music Hall also constructed by Onus in 1888. It was Inverell's second public hall with seating for 400-500 people and it was used for highland gatherings and grand balls, however, was dismantled in 1911, part of it being re-erected on a farm east of town.

The hotel's original verandah was demolished sometime during the 1960s, however, was reinstated in 2019 based on photographic evidence.



*Oxford Hotel, Otho Street, 1886*

## 28

## Former School of Arts

**Style:** Italianate

**Location:** 5-7 Evans Street

**Year Constructed:** 1906

**Builder:** A. Arnold

**Architect:** John Francis O'Connor

It is believed that the first School of Arts in Inverell was a brick building constructed at the close of 1868 on the site of what would later become the Town Hall. The building that stands before you was constructed in 1906 for \$1,189, which included furnishings.

In an era when many people received very little formal education, School of Arts and Mechanics' Institutes established libraries and were venues for lectures, debates and meetings. Upon construction, the building housed a reading room, billiard room and library for its male membership.

In 1938 this building and the adjoining School of Arts Hall became the Council's administration centre. In 1940 Council commenced a free lending library in a section of the Town Hall, and in 1963 the Council vacated the School of Arts building and leased it to the Department of Technical Education for secretarial studies, with Butler Hall leased for rural studies.

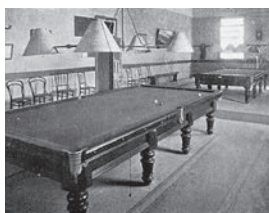
The building has a stuccoed façade with ornate and richly moulded ornament in the Italianate style. Iconic columns are each side of the entrance and it has an elaborate moulded parapet featuring cherubs and a central pediment with acroterion - a pedestal placed on a pediment to support a statue or other ornamentation and a bust of Shakespeare.



*Former School of Arts, Evans Street, 1906*



*Reading Room, c1908-1919*



*Billiard Room, c1908-1919*



*Butler Hall, Evans Street, 1909*

# 29

## Butler Hall

Formerly the School of Arts Hall, it was designed with a gallery and removable stage, so that it could be used for amateur theatricals as well as meetings, dinners and as a supper room for balls in the Town Hall. Demand to use this building was so great that bookings were made 12 months in advance to secure the date of the organiser's choice.

It is interesting to note that the Town Hall was constructed in 1905, the School of Arts in 1906 and this building only three years later - the town of Inverell obviously had a need for, and could afford, three significant buildings for public gatherings within a space of so few years.

In 1972 Council granted the Inverell Art Society use of the hall and in 1995 this building and the School of Arts were linked together with alterations designed and supervised by architect Tim Shellshear, costing approximately \$150,000.

**Style:** Victorian Italianate

**Location:** 5-7 Evans Street

**Year Started:** 1909

**Year Modified:** 1995





*The Inverell Club, Evans Street, 1909*

30

## The Inverell Club

The Inverell Club was formed in 1902 with their first club being located on the corner of Vivian and Evans Streets. Many of the original squatter families of the district were foundation members of the club.

This Club's present building was constructed in 1909 by Sydney-based contractors, Wheelright & Alderson. It was originally lit with acetylene gas and had a specially designed billiard room, a reading room and a lounge. Construction was financed by debentures.

The building is an outstanding example of a Federation style country club remaining and is possibly one of the finest in Australia. It is largely in original condition, with walls made from rusticated weatherboarding on rendered masonry walls, a hipped and gabled tiled roof with a half-timbered and roughcast gables, tall roughcast chimneys and dome sections with a small paned clerestory light over the main foyer.

Ladies were not permitted to join the club until 1983, however, the first afternoon tea for lady friends of members was held in 1909.

**Style:** Federation

**Location:** 1-3 Evans Street

**Year Constructed:** 1909

**Builder:** Wheelright & Alderson

**Architect:** Manson & Pickering

*Originally called 'The Gentlemen's Club' -  
Ladies were not permitted to join until 1983!*

## 31

## Former Austral Band Hall

**Location:** 61 Campbell Street

**Year Started:** 1876

**Modified:** 1922, 1992

This building was constructed in 1876 by the New South Wales Council of Education as Inverell was unable to cater for the growing school population. Within seven years the school population had grown further and plans for a third school were drafted.

By 1887, the building ceased to be used as a school. It was briefly used as an auction house but in 1894 it was used as the Council Chambers until 1900.

Over the years, it has been used by Inverell Public School, the Presbyterian Church, Inverell Mounted Rifles, Inverell Camera Club and the Austral Band.

In 1922, Council granted the Austral band this site and the former school and band hall was carefully pulled down and reconstructed on this site.

Between 1903 – 1922, the band played at major contests and functions in Inverell including the agricultural show, hospital bazaars, concerts, Anzac parades, sporting fixtures, school fetes and even local cattle sales.

The band was forced into recess on the eve of WWII, and was reformed after the war and survived until 1971.

It is now used as a base for the Inverell Macintyre Lions Club.



*Former Austral Band Hall, Campbell Street, 1876*

## 32

## Former Water Treatment Plant

This rather distinct looking building, constructed around what looks like two large round concrete tanks, was used as the town's water treatment plant until 1982. In that year Inverell connected a far better supply from Copeton Dam. The old supply, which came from what is now Lake Inverell, required heavy treatment because it contained a great deal of lime and sediment.

**Location:** 41 Campbell Street

**Year Constructed:** 1982



*Former Water Treatment Plant*



*Former Power Station*



## Former Power Station

This building was constructed in 1910 and housed a large diesel generator that produced electricity for the town. The building originally had a tall chimney on the left and a gabled roof with three central arched windows. When remodeled, the roof line was removed.

It operated until 1950 when power was then purchased from the grid. In 1958 a coal fired electricity station was opened in Ashford providing power until 1994. These days Inverell has a small hydro station powered by the overflow of Copeton Dam.

**Location:** 37 Campbell Street

**Year Constructed:** 1910

**Architect:** John Francis O'Connor

*“History is who we are and why we are the way we are.”*

David McCullough, American historian

## Other attractions in the area:



### ● Inverell Pioneer Village

Located just south of the town, the Inverell Pioneer Village is an extensive collection of 19th century homes and buildings which have been relocated in a delightful area of landscaped gardens. They present the impression of a colonial village. There are also old steam and traction engines. Afternoon tea is available on Sunday and by arrangement.

The complex is open **Tuesday to Friday from 10.00 am - 4.00 pm and, on Saturday and Sunday from 9.30 am - 1.30 pm.** Details of the buildings in the complex are available at <http://www.inverellpioneervillage.org.au/buildings.php>.

### ● National Transport Museum

Located at 69 Rifle Range Road the National Transport Museum is open every day from 10.00 am - 4.00 pm. It proudly boasts that it has 120 vehicle exhibits, ranging from Vintage, Veteran, Classic and Motorcycles ... Some of the vehicles on display **Tel: (02) 6721 2270** or check out <http://www.nationaltransportmuseum.info>.

### ● Kurrajong Memorial

The Kurrajong Memorial is located on the Gwydir Highway just 1 km east of Inverell. The Memorial is dedicated to the two groups of young men who enlisted during World War I. The second group, "The Kurrajongs", were the largest single contingent of men to leave a country town to enlist. They were based on the idea of the famous Coo-ee Marches where men from a country town walked to a recruitment destination and attracted other recruits on the way. In January 1916 a group of 114 men left Inverell. The group was named



'The Kurrajongs'. They travelled by train and visited the neighbouring towns of Warialda and Moree. By the time they reached the Narrabri Army Depot Camp the number had reached 150. Each of the kurrajong trees around the memorial is a reminder of one soldier who did not return to the area. **For more information check out <http://monumentaustalia.org.au/themes/conflict/ww1/display/21652-kurrajong-memorial>.**

### ● Lake Inverell Reserve

Located off the Gwydir Highway to the east of the town centre and at the end of the Lake Inverell Drive, is the Lake Inverell Reserve. The Macintyre River was dammed in 1938 and, over the years, the reserve has become an aquatic sanctuary which is a fine spot for picnicking, fishing and bushwalking along the two designated walking tracks: the Lake Inverell Walk (3 km return trip, easy grade walk)

### ● Copeton Waters State Park

Located 39 km south-west of Inverell on the Copeton Dam Road is the 900 ha recreational and adventure playground. There are camp and caravan sites, a kiosk and general store, an amenities block, cabins, fuel sales, boat hire, a six-hole golf course, tennis courts, sailing, windsurfing, power boating, water skiing, fishing (for cod, yellowbelly, silver perch, catfish and redfin), walking tracks, two adventure playgrounds, waterslides and plenty of wildlife. **Tel: (02) 6723 6269** or <http://www.copeton.com.au>.

### ● Goonowigall State Conservation Area

Pronounced "gunny-wiggle" is located in scenic granite country on the Tingha Road, 5 km south of



Inverell. The conservation area covers 1057 hectares. Sections have been a flora and fauna reserve since 1920. It has a number of picnic spots and 10 km of walking tracks. There are three walking tracks which start from the car park.

### ● Fossicking

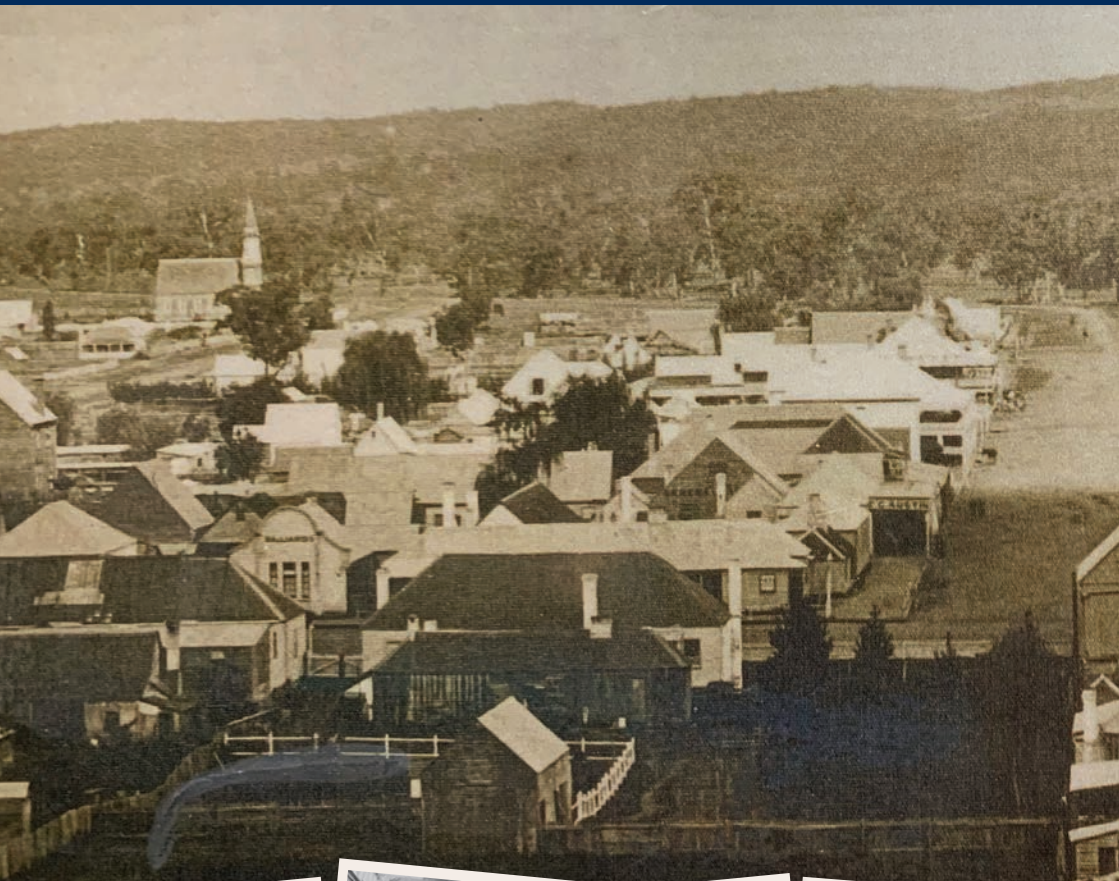
Check out: <http://www.inverell.com.au/what-to-do/fossicking.html> which has details of each organisation, a total of nine fossicking areas (most devoted to sapphires) around Inverell. It is possible to hire all the necessary equipment and the local operations are eager to advise on suitable sites. Apart from the possibility of finding valuable gemstones, the appeal lies in being out in the bush, camping and just having a time of relaxation and fun.

### ● Kings Plains National Park

Located 45 km north-east of Inverell is Kings Plains National Park, an area of rugged terrain, with rocky ridges, woodland, heath and open forest. There are some rare plants, as well as a large population of birds and mammals, from brightly coloured turquoise parrots and crimson rosellas to eastern grey kangaroos and swamp wallabies. Many of them are attracted in the early morning and late afternoon to the park's main feature, Kings Plains Creek, which has rapids, waterfalls (Kings Plain Falls are one of the main attractions) and large tranquil water pools. It is an excellent, isolated destination for bushwalking, exploring, picnicking, camping and birdwatching. Check <http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/visit-a-park/parks/Kings-Plains-National-Park> for more information.







*"History is not the past but a map of the past, drawn from a particular point of view,  
to be useful to the modern traveller."* - Henry Glassie, US historian



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