History of Bingara

Bingara is located 150km north of Tamworth, 70km west of Inverell, 604km north of Sydney and 500km south of Brisbane.

Aboriginal for shallow river crossing, Bingara is nestled on the Gwydir River in the New England area of northwest New South Wales. Bingara is at the heart of the Fossickers Way, a picturesque route that offers a quiet alternative to the New England or Newell Highways.

Bingara is home to some of Australia’s most highly regarded beef cattle studs and a diverse range of livestock breeders including sheep, horses, alpacas, pigs and poultry. The Gwydir valley is renowned for its irrigated and dry land cropping, as it produces a soil that is ideal for livestock production and the production of the traditional crops of wheat, barley, sorghum, lucerne and oats.

The area has a long Indigenous history with significant sacred sites across the region including the town of Tingha. In 2000 a memorial was established at nearby Myall Creek. The Myall Creek Memorial site recognises the infamous Myall Creek Massacre, which took place on June 10, 1838 where twenty eight Aboriginal men, women and children were massacred and their bodies burned. The ensuing court case marked the first time in Australian history that white men were tried for crimes against Aborigines. Seven men were hanged as a result. The massacre of Aboriginal people at Myall Creek Station is a sad reflection on the early white settlers of Australia. In recent times a memorial walk has been established for those who died in this massacre and the area has turned into a major bush regeneration site. The memorial is to be found on the Bingara to Delungra road approximately 15km south of Delungra.

The European history of the town commenced 21st May 1827 when Allan Cunningham camped at the junction of the Gwydir River and Halls Creek. Then came the discovery of gold within the district and large numbers of people including many Chinese came to the area to make their fortune.

One of the highlights of the annual calendar is the town’s Orange Festival, centred around the row of orange trees planted along either side of the town’s main street. The highlight is the picking of the oranges and the parade, which marches down the main street.

Bingara became Willoughby’s friendly-city during a 1995 campaign to raise awareness of droughts and country life by former Mayor of Willoughby, the late John Squire.

Regional NSW Map – Concentric from Bingara
When the relationship was formed Bingara was experiencing a terrible drought. John Squire, in an act typical of his community spirit, initiated a fund-raising drive which saw 250 Christmas presents provided for Bingara children for Christmas 1994 and a cheque of more than $3,000 from the people of Willoughby presented at the official signing of the Bingara/Willoughby relationship Australia Day 1995.

A number of programs now take place regularly as a result of the Friendly City Relations; The student exchange takes place every year.

**Student Exchange:**
The Bingara/Willoughby Student Exchange occurs every year to coincide with the annual Bingara Orange Festival (late June) in Bingara & the Willoughby Spring Festival (month of September).

Students have opportunities to spend a time in a rural agricultural school, visit a farms, horse riding, gold panning, enjoy a show at the Roxy Cinema and enjoy Bingara’s hospitality and much more. The exchange provides young people with invaluable experiences of the country-city lifestyles.

Not a year has gone by when young people have not gained a sense of respect and understanding of how other young people live in their respective communities. In fact, the young people often make close friends with their country peers!