

heritage drives of Orange & district

Heritage Drives

Take a scenic drive through the historic area of Orange and surrounds. There are four drives covering both urban and rural areas including the smaller villages surrounding Orange. The drives explore gold mining towns, historic villages and an area rich in agriculture and history.

You may wish to follow the driving trail, go direct to any of the attractions on the drive or take one of the detours to one of the outlying towns within the region. All drives start from the Orange Visitor Information Centre in Byng Street, Orange.

Drive one

Allow 1 hour driving time or longer to discover the historic sites.

Start at the Orange Visitor Information Centre and travel west along Byng Street 1.5km, turn right onto Mitchell Highway, and right along Burrendong Way to the small village of March 8km.

MARCH is said to have been named by Sir Thomas Mitchell as a compliment to a renowned beauty of England, the Countess of March. Cobb & Co ran through March in 1863 on its way to Ironbark (now Stuart Town) and Wellington. A school opened in 1886 and after 107 years of service the Post Office closed in 1984. A few clusters of houses and two churches remain to mark the place of March in the districts history.

Continue north along Burrendong Way to Mullion Creek 16km.

DETOUR – You may wish to continue along Burrendong Way to Lake Burrendong and Mookerawa Waters Park via Euchareena (25km) and Stuart Town (40km) or return to Orange via Molong along Belgravia Road (approximately 60km). NB gravel road to Molong.



Millthorpe



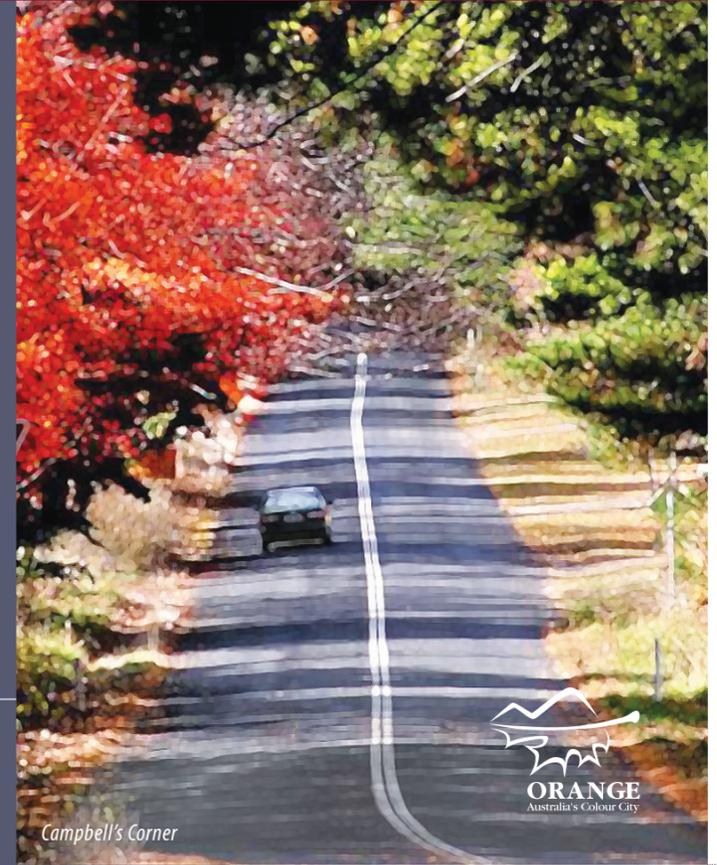
Byng Church



Lucknow



Mount Canobolas



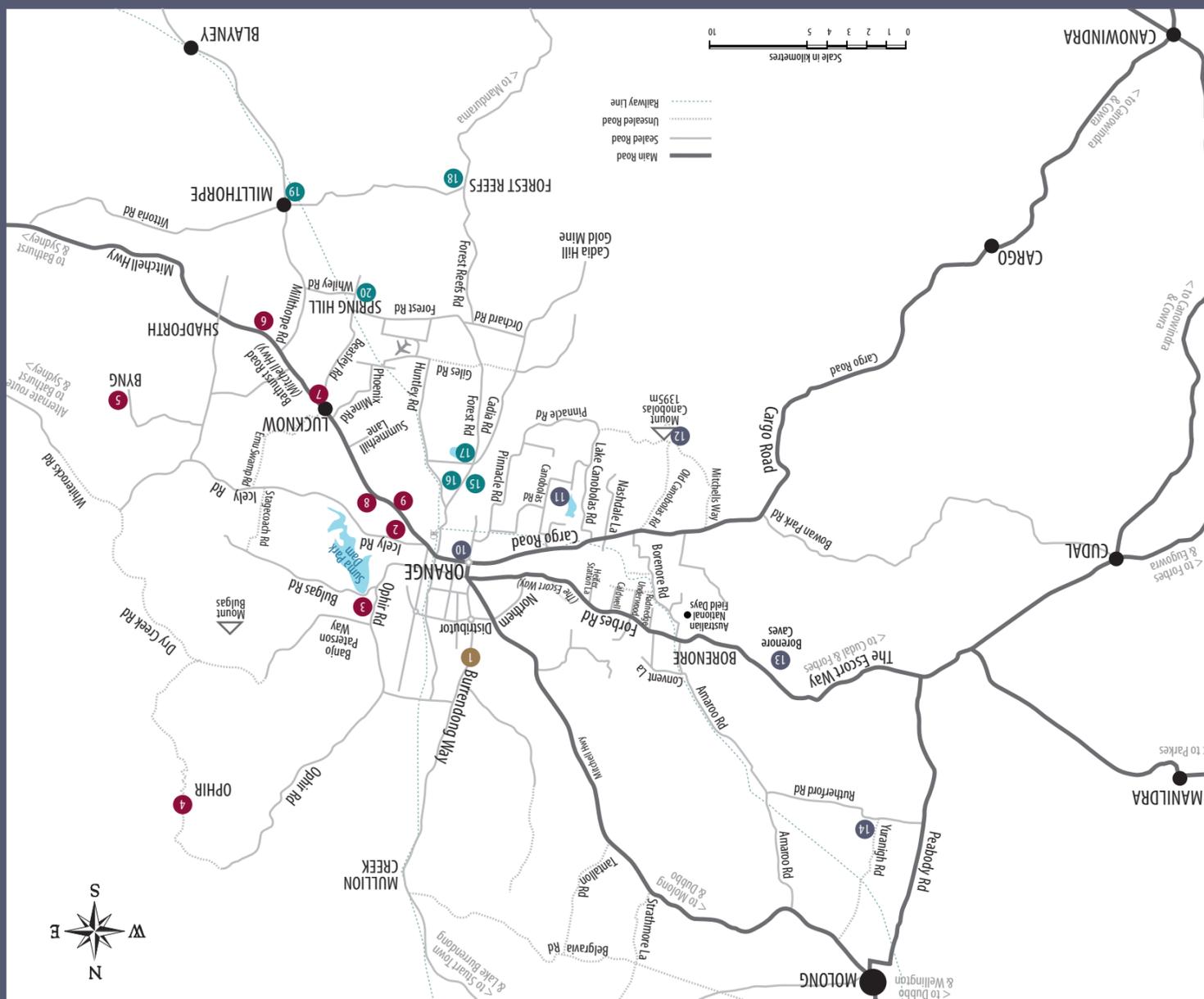
Campbell's Corner



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT



Orange Visitor Information Centre
 FREE CALL 1800 069 466
www.visitorange.com.au
www.orange.nsw.gov.au



- Drive one**
- 1 March
- Drive two**
- 2 Orange Central Cemetery
- 3 Banjo Paterson Park
- 4 Ophir
- 5 Byng
- 6 Shadforth
- 7 Lucknow
- 8 Chinaman's Bend Cemetery
- 9 Lone Pine
- Drive three**
- 10 Cook Park
- 11 Lake Canobolas
- 12 Mt Canobolas
- 13 Borenore Caves
- 14 Yranigh's Grave
- Drive four**
- 15 Gnoo Blas Race Track
- 16 Jack Brabham Park
- 17 Airport Insignia
- 18 Gosling Creek Reserve
- 19 Forest Reefs
- 20 Spring Hill

heritage drives of orange & district

Drive Two

Allow 1.5 hours driving time or longer to discover the historic sites.

Start from the Orange Visitor Information Centre, turn right at Peisley Street, left at the traffic lights and proceed east along Mitchell Highway 2km, turn left at Lone Pine Avenue.

2 ORANGE GENERAL CEMETERY was surveyed in 1853 and has been in continuous use for over 150 years. Take time to wander through the cemetery, read the headstones and ponder the past. Pick up a brochure for a self-guided tour of the Cemetery at the Orange Visitor Information Centre.

Continue north along Lone Pine Avenue/Wakeford Street and turn right onto March Street/Ophir Road for 4km, passing Orange's current water supply, Suma Park Dam on your right, and then the Resource Recovery Centre on your left where you can view 'Waste Not', a community public art project.

3 BANJO PATERSON PARK – The site of Banjo Paterson's birthplace. He was born at 'Narrambla' on 17 February 1864. A memorial to Australia's famous poet was unveiled in 1947 and in 2003 a bust of Banjo was erected at the Park as part of a Centenary of Federation Project.

Continue north along Ophir Road for approximately 23km to Ophir. NB gravel road and not suitable for caravans.

4 OPHIR was the location of the discovery of the first payable gold in New South Wales in April 1851 and Australia's first gold rush. Today Ophir is a recreation reserve of 560 hectares, located at the junction of the Lower Lewis Ponds and Summer Hill Creeks. Take along a picnic to have beneath the willows, fossick for gold along Summer Hill Creek, fish for trout (you will need to obtain a licence), look for wildlife, wander in the historic cemetery or explore the diggings along one of the walking trails. Care should be taken around open shafts.

The reserve is open daily.

Continue south along Ophir Road; turn left at Dry Creek Road, through the village of Lewis Ponds and travel towards Byng (20km). NB gravel road.

5 BYNG was settled in the 1830s by Cornish Methodist families and became known as the Cornish Settlement, then as Carangara. In 1854 the village reserve was approved by Governor Fitzroy and became known as the Parish of Byng, Bathurst County. Byng was named after Admiral John Byng who was executed for treason in 1757.

The Wesleyan Chapel, which is located on the site of the original church of 1842, is still in use today. Opposite is the historic cemetery with graves of pioneers of the district.

Continue south to Mitchell Highway; turn right onto the highway and travel towards Shadforth (8km).

6 SHADFORTH was named after Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Shadforth who arrived in Australia in 1826. The village had a post office, a school that operated from 1881 – 1976 and a church that has been relocated to the Orange Botanic Gardens. The Royal Oak Hotel and the Black Bull Inn operated until 1877. Four miner's cottages remain in the village and the original layout of the village is still evident.

DETOUR – You may want to take a detour and visit the historic villages of Millthorpe (10km) and Carcoar (25km or 35km via Blayney).

Continue east along Mitchell Highway 6km to Lucknow.

7 LUCKNOW was part of the property of William Charles Wentworth, who had made the first European crossing of the Blue Mountains in 1813 with Blaxland and Lawson in search of more fertile ground. Lucknow was named in 1863, probably after the siege of Lucknow in India; or maybe the name is a deliberate play on the words Luck Now.

During the 1860s many gold claims sprang up, their names reflecting the backgrounds and hopes of those who toiled there: 'Homeward Bound', 'Perseverance', 'Hard to Find' and 'Shamrock' are just a few.

The village housed a police station, three churches, post office, several hotels, one that has been at the same site since the 1860s, and a school of arts. Examples of typical miner's cottages are still in existence in Lucknow today. The two poppet heads at the eastern end of the village are reminders of the legacy of Lucknow and mark the location of the Wentworth Main and Reform Mines.

Continue west along Mitchell Highway towards Orange about 5km passing 'Summer Hill' and 'Wellwood' homesteads.

8 CHINAMAN'S BEND CEMETERY – The pioneer Cemetery originated from the Frederick's Valley Government Stock Station c 1820s – 1830s. Chinaman's Bend was named after Chinese market gardeners who leased adjacent land in the 1880s and 1890s. The cemetery's headstones date back to the early 1840s.

Continue west along Mitchell Highway 3km, the Lone Pine is located on northeastern corner of Lone Pine Avenue.

9 LONE PINE – A solitary pine tree once grew in a sector of the Gallipoli Peninsula in Turkey now known as Lone Pine, the tree became a battle casualty of WWI. One of three Australian brothers, Benjamin Smith, plucked a cone from a shattered branch, which had been used to disguise a Turkish trench, and sent the cone home to his mother. Mrs Smith successfully propagated two young trees, one of which was presented to Inverell, the town of the birth of the Smith boys, and the other to the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, in memory of all sons killed at Gallipoli.

However the trees grown by the Smith family were not the only trees to make it back to Australia. Several other veterans returned with cones, many of which were propagated as RSL fundraisers. One is assumed to have produced this 'Lone Pine'.

Drive Three

Allow 1.5 hours driving time or longer to discover the historic sites.

From the Orange Visitor Information Centre drive west along Byng Street, past some of Orange's spectacular 19th Century architecture including the Court House, Town Hall, Holy Trinity Church and the Union Bank, turn left at St Joseph's Church into Hill Street; and right into Summer Street towards Cook Park.

10 COOK PARK is located just minutes from the CBD. The park was proclaimed in 1873 and was officially named in honour of Captain James Cook in 1882. The park is a renowned Victorian era park of state significance. Attractions include Blowes Conservatory, open lattice fernery, duck ponds, aviary, picnic tables and the Park Guildry, a unique handcrafts centre. The park is open daily from 7.30am till dusk.

Continue west along Summer Street, Coronation Drive and Cargo Road 6.5km; turn left onto Lake Canobolas Road for 1.5km.

11 LAKE CANOBOLAS is at the foot of Mt Canobolas, on the headwaters of Molong Creek. The lake offers picnic and barbeque facilities, a walking trail, fishing, Apex Playground and passive water sports. The Lake is open daily from 7.30am till dusk.

LAKE CANOBOLAS PUMP HOUSE on the eastern side of the Lake was used to pump water from Lake Canobolas to the town of Orange from 1918 – 1957. The Pump House was a restoration project carried out by students from Orange TAFE as a Bicentennial Project in 1988. The engine is one of the very few of its type, built by Richard Hornby and Sons in England and is still in its operating environment. The Pump House is open daily from 7.30am till dusk.

Turn left along Canobolas Road and travel south for approximately 5km to the base of the mountain.

12 MT CANOBOLAS, from the Aboriginal words, 'coona' and 'boooloo' meaning two heads or twin shoulders, features spectacular views, several picnic areas and walking tracks that take you through woodlands, heath and forests. The area has significant conservation value. It hosts a unique range of plants, rock formations and a number of endangered species. NSW Parks and Wildlife Service manages Mt Canobolas State Conservation Area.

Mt Canobolas is the highest peak in the Central West, rising to 1395m above sea level and on a clear day the summit is visible from 150km away.

DETOUR – Detour to the Pinnacle; Continue along Lake Canobolas Rd 2km south of the Mt Canobolas turn off on Canobolas Road. There's a walking trail to the summit of the Pinnacle on the northern side of the road that takes approximately 1/2 hour. Once at the top you are rewarded with magnificent views over the surrounding orchards and down the Towac Valley to Lake Canobolas and Mt Canobolas. You will need good walking shoes.

There is also a wonderful picnic area on the southern side of the road at the Pinnacle Reserve which features picnic shelters, toilets and barbecues. You may wish to continue along Pinnacle Road, travelling through orchards and vineyards back to Orange.

Travel back past lake Canobolas 5km to Cargo Road and turn left towards Nashdale (1/2km), then right onto Borenore Rd. Travel 7km along Borenore Rd past the site of the Australian National Field Days to Escort Way and travel west towards Borenore Caves (3.5km).

13 BORENORE CAVES RESERVE is an ideal place to have a picnic and wander through the reserve and explore the natural wonders, including the Tunnel and the Arch Cave, the unique landscape and well-developed walking tracks. You will need good walking shoes and a torch.

Aboriginal groups from the Wiradjuri tribe inhabited the district for thousands of years. Sir Thomas Mitchell also visited the caves in 1836 during his third expedition into the interior. In 1898 Frank Rusconi, a monumental mason, recognised the rich quality of the marble on the reserve, which was then mined for approximately 30 years. Examples of the marble can be found on some of the headstones in the Orange Cemetery and extensively in buildings such as Central Station, Sydney.

DETOUR – You may wish to continue 40km west via Cudal to Canowindra, now known for hot-air ballooning and its rich findings of fossilised fish that can be viewed at the Age of Fishes Museum, or head west to Forbes via Eugowra (100km) and stop at Escort Rock, 4km south east of Eugowra where the Forbes gold escort was bailed up in 1862 by bushranger Frank Gardiner and his gang.

Turn right onto Escort Way towards Orange and turn left just before the railway line at Borenore, travel north along Amaroo Road (15km) passing Fairbridge Farm; turn left onto the Rutherford Rd (2.7km) to Yuranigh's Grave: (5km south of Molong).

14 YURANIGH'S GRAVE is the grave of the Aboriginal guide who accompanied Surveyor Sir Thomas Mitchell on his expedition to the interior of tropical Australia. Yuranigh belonged to the Wiradjuri tribe and became famous for his work and his bush lore. Yuranigh was buried within a circle of carved trees, as was the custom of his tribe, three of which are still alive and the other, protected from the elements. Out of respect Mitchell arranged for a headstone to be placed on the grave, which the Government erected in 1852 and reads "To Native Courage, Honesty and Fidelity. Yuranigh, who accompanied the expedition of discovery into Tropical Australia in 1846, lies buried here according to the rites of his countrymen". The area is now a reserve managed by NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and is open daily.

DETOUR – Continue west along the Mitchell Highway to Molong (5km) to the birthplace of the merino sheep industry or return to Orange (30km).

Drive four

Allow 1 hour driving time or longer to discover the historic sites.

From the Orange Visitor Information Centre turn right onto Peisley Street and travel south past the railway station and Wade Park on the right; over the railway line at East Fork Railway Junction to Jack Brabham Park (4km).

15 GNOO BLAS RACE TRACK – The first race was held in 1953 as part of the inaugural Cherry Blossom Festival and was held annually as part of the festival until 1961. Gnoo Blas was the starting ground for many of Australia's top riders and drivers including Sir Jack Brabham and Kelvin Curruthers. The track also attracted many international names. The start of the track was along Huntley Road beside the railway line and proceeded along Bloomfield Road to Forest Road and then down the straight with the finish line in Huntley Road.

16 JACK BRABHAM PARK/AIRPORT INSIGNIA – In 1924 Sir Neville Howse VC, Mayor of Orange (1914 and 1921) suggested that Orange should have an airport. A site was selected at Bloomfield and was officially opened in 1938. A new airport at Spring Hill was opened in 1961 making this site redundant and turned into sports fields. A plaque was unveiled in 1985 renaming the park, Sir Jack Brabham Park. The letters are situated along the southern boundary near a Council depot shed and are the only remnants of the airport. A concrete circle surrounds the concrete insignia letters that spell 'ORANGE' they were installed as a system to direct aeroplanes for landing.

Continue south along Forest Road past Bloomfield Hospital (2km).

Gosling Creek is situated on the corner of Forest and Bloomfield Roads.

17 GOSLING CREEK was named after Jonathon William Gosling who received land grants in the area in the 1820s and 1830s. In 1877 the Orange Municipal Council decided to obtain a more permanent supply of water for the town. Gosling Creek Reservoir was completed in 1890 and the first reticulated water supply was turned on. In 1917 plans were made for an additional dam to service the town; this is now known as Lake Canobolas.

Recently Gosling Creek Reserve has undergone major change. The area has been transformed into an environmentally based recreational facility. The concept involves a recreation area for the whole family surrounded by native vegetation. While the reserve is still in the early stages of development, the picnic and recreation area features a shared pathway suitable for walking, cycling & roller-blading, and children's play equipment.

Continue south along Forest Road (approximately 7km); turn right onto Orchard Road (1km), turn left onto Forest Reefs Road (9km).

18 FOREST REEFS was predominantly a gold mining area with alluvial gold being found in the 1860s-1870s. A post office was opened in 1870. In 1901 Forest Reefs was recorded as having a butcher shop, blacksmith shop, baker, school, two hotels and three stores.

Turn left at Forest Reefs Tavern and continue along the Forest Reefs Road towards Millthorpe (10km).

19 MILLTHORPE – Millthorpe's history dates from 1834. Originally named Spring Grove, the town was renamed in 1884 due to the importance of a large flourmill established in 1882. The railway reached the area in the 1870s and provided farmers with access to profitable Sydney markets.

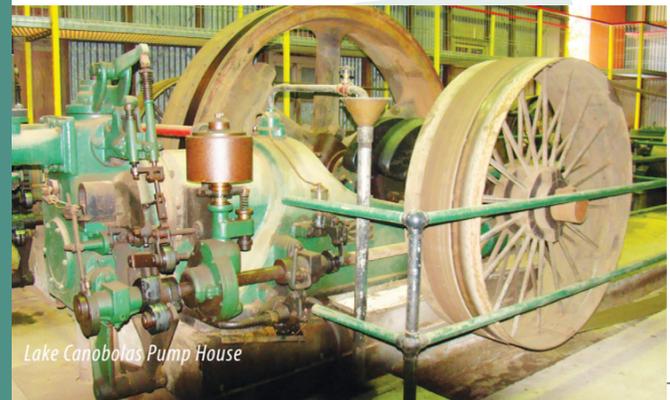
Millthorpe is classified by the National Trust and has a number of fine historic buildings as well as cobbled bluestone streets, art galleries, cafes, specialty shops and the Golden Memories Museum.

Travel through Millthorpe and turn left onto Millthorpe Road/Park Street for 5km, turn left towards Spring Hill at Whileys Road and travel for 2km to the historic village of Spring Hill.

DETOUR – Turn right onto Park Street at Millthorpe to discover the villages of Blayney, historic Carcoar & Mandurama.

20 SPRING HILL – The name Spring Hill was mentioned by 1855, and by 1861, 56 people were listed as owning land in the district. The area was successfully farmed with chaff, peas, potatoes, cattle, pigs and horses. The railway line reached Blayney in 1876 and proceeded to Orange via Spring Hill in 1877. It was foreseen that a village would develop around the Spring Hill Railway Station. Spring Hill thrived, although the prominence of the railway faded and the station was demolished in 1988. A heritage walk brochure has been developed for Spring Hill and is available at the Orange Visitor Information Centre.

Proceed back to Orange via the Forest Road, Spring Terrace, Springside; Airport Road, Huntley; or Beasley Road via Lucknow.



Lake Canobolas Pump House